E. Chapel 1781

A COLLECTION OF CERTAIN Epistles & Testimonies

Of Divine

Consolation, Experience and *Doctrine*,

Written by that

Faithful, Patient and Long-Suffering Servant of Christ,

William Bennit.

Who Finished his *Testimony* the 23d day of the 4th Month 1684. In the County Goal at *Ipswich* in *Suffolk*.

And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.

LONDON,

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UMI

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Edmond

Edmond Crols
HIS
TESTIMONY
For his Deceased Friend
William Bennit.

THis Testimony lives in my Heart, and is upon me to bear for and concerning my dear and well beloved Friend **William Bennit**, whom, with many more worthy Ones, God Almighty, in his endless Love unto mankind, raised up and endued with power from on high, to preach the Everlasting Gospel of Life and Salvation in our Age; and forever blessed be the Lord who hath caused his Blessed Work to prosper by them, to the gathering many Thousands to himself, notwithstanding the great opposition they have meet with, both from the Enemy of mankind within, and the Exercises, Hardships and cruel Persecutions from his Instruments without; yet so powerfully did the Lord appear in them, that the Inhabitants of the Earth was awakened, and Trembling took hold of many, Judgment was laid to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plumit; yea,

yea, the ſound of the Goſpel, by theſe worthy Meſſengers Preached, went through the Earth, and many of its Inhabitance thereby came to learn Righteouſneſs; amongſt which worthy Meſſengers this my dear Friend *William Bennit* was one, who laboured in the ſervice of the Goſpel for the gathering in the out-caſts of *Jacob*, and the diſperced of *Iſrael*.

He was a man wholly given up both in Body and Mind to ſerve the Lord, and what he did for God, he did it with all his Might; he ſpared no pains wherein he might ſerve the Truth, which to do was his whole delight, his care was great over the Church of Chriſt and whole Family of God, and when in Bonds for the Goſpel ſake, he viſited them with divers good Epiſtles, full of heavenly Exhortations and Comfort, to the great refreſhment of God's Children; oh, the ſence of the want of him doth often make me ſad, knowing how ſerviceable he was in the Church, though I doubt not but the Lord can raiſe up ſome worthy Ones to ſucceed him in the Work and Service whereunto he was called; oh, the many ſweet refreſhments which I have had with him cannot be forgotten, what ſhall I ſay for the want of him whoſe preſence hath often times been very comfortable to me? I believe years to come will know the want of him.

I had inward acquaintance with him above many, and can teſtifie he was endued with many divine Attainments, he had the true qualifications of an Elder and Miniſter of Chriſt, and walked in Holineſs, Meekneſs and Godly Fear towards all men, he never exalted himſelf above any, but as a perfect example in Humility, Self-Denial and Meekneſs he behaved himſelf towards the Meaneſt; his Zeal for the Truth appeared to be very great, for though he was a very weak man, as to his bodily ſtrength, yet in preaching the Goſpel he was carried forth with ſuch Fervency and Zeal for the Lord, being by the mighty Power of God upheld, that at ſuch times there

there appeared no Infirmnels of Body in him, and notwithstanding the weakneſs of his Body, he often Travelled in the ſervice of the Goſpel, being freely given up to ſpend, and to be ſpent for its ſake; his Miniſtry was plain & prevalent, vvhereof he had a very good Gift, he vvas vvell acquainted vvith the holy Scriptures of Truth, vvhich he made much uſe of for the opening the Underſtandings of People, vvhich often proved very Effectual for the convincing of many.

And as he vvas an inceſſant Labourer in the Goſpel vvhereever he came, ſo alſo, vvas he as Valiant in ſuffering for the ſame, vvhen ever called thereunto, as the many grievous Impriſonments, vvhich he hath met vvith for the Goſpel's ſake doth vvitneſs, for he hath, for his Teſtimonies ſake, been caſt into divers Goals, as *Yarmouth*, *Bliborough*, *Ipſwich* and *Melton* ſeveral times, & alſo at *Edmonds-Bury*, vvhere he lay amongſt the Fellons nigh eight years together; & laſtly, he vvas taken from a Meeting at *Woodbridge*, and committed to *Melton* Priſon, vvhere he lay till the quarter Seſſions held at *Woodbridg*, unto vvhich he vvas brought, and vvas by an order of Seſſions removed from thence to *Ipſwich* Priſon, being then in the Winter ſeaſon, & though he vvas very vveak at that time, and not fit to be carried forth, the Weather being very cold, and at that time it Snovved very much, yet vvas he in the midſt of all hurried avvay; I vvas then vvith him and vvith grief of Heart beheld this cruel Treatment, of this innocent Lamb, vvho then ſaid, *If it lay in his freedom to go or not, although he might gain much as to the outward, he could not go his weakneſs was ſuch, yet for the Truths ſake he was freely given up, though it proved the diſſolution of his Body*; as indeed it ſo happened, for he never got over it, but grew weaker, and weaker, till upon the 23*d* day of the 4*th* month 1684, in the Priſon Houſe in *Ipſwich*, the place of his Confinement, he finiſhed his Teſtimony, and laid down his Head in

perfect Peace; thus vvas this good man Perſecuted unto Death, who freely forgave them that Perſecuted him; and oh, ſaith my Soul, if it may ſtand vvith the vvill of God, that they may find Repentance before they go hence, that his Blood may not be required at their hands.

Well, he is now gone beyond the reach of all his Enemies, he hath run the bleſſed Race, he has fought the good Fight, hath kept the Faith, and is now Crowned with that Eternal weight of Glory which never endeth; and though he be removed from us, yet his Life remains with us, and his Name is a ſweet memorial unto us; yea, he ſhall be reckoned amongſt the Generations of the Righteous, and time ſhall never blot him out of their Remembrance, who ſerved the Lord withal his Heart, and loved not his Life unto Death for his Name ſake.

Oh, the remembrance of this my dear Friend hath often times been a refreſhment to me, and the many ſweet and precious oppertunities I have had with him are at this time freſh in my remembrance; I cannot forget thoſe heavenly bedewings, and ſweet ſtreams of divine Life, from the God of Life, who is the Fountain of all our well-ſprings, which often times ran through his Veſſel, as through a Conduit Pipe, to the great refreſhment of his Children.

Oh, when I conſider his ſervice in the Church of Chriſt, and how ready he was to help the Weak, and encourage the Feeble; yea, to reach forth his helping hand unto all, that none might be left behind, and that now at ſuch a time as this, wherein Tryals and Exerciſes ſeem to abound upon us, it ſhould pleaſe the Lord to removed him from us; my Spirit is bowed before the Lord in the conſideration thereof, & for a time my Soul was afflicted within me, being deeply ſenſible of the great loſs of him at this time of day.

But

But while I was Meditating in the conſideration hereof, my Soul was revived in the feeling of the Springs of Life to ariſe, which ſprang up in this wiſe, God is the ſame that ever he was, his Arm is not ſhortned that it cannot Save, neither is his Ear heavy that it cannot hear the crys of his Children; but his care is, and will be, over all thoſe that put their truſt in him, and againſt ſuch no Weapon howſoever formed ſhall Proſper, and that he hath not removed his Servant from us thereby to weaken us, but rather that we ſhould wholly look unto him only, from whom alone our Salvation comes; who will certainly take care of all thoſe who are faithful unto him in their Teſtimony for his Name, and will ſupply ſuch with whatſoever he ſees is needful for them; yea, the ſame Power that kept and preſerved this our dear Friend through all his Tryals and Exerciſes, who hath now finiſhed his Courſe with Joy, will alſo preſerve us, as we are faithful thereunto; in which the Lord keep and preſerve all his People, through all their Tryals and Exerciſes, to the end, is the breathing of my Soul.

O Thou my dear Friend who art now from us gone,
Unto thine everlasting Rest in the Eternal one,
Who now for all thy Labours in which thou didst abound,
Rewarded art with endless Life, and art with Glory Crown'd;
Oh worthy man of God, thy Name for ever shall,
Recorded be amongst the Righteous Gen'rations all,
Thou lovedst not thy Life to Death, but gave up all unto
The service of God's Truth most pure, and for it didst forgo
The World and all things else that unto thee was near,
That thou might'st be for evermore with thy Redeemer dear;
And though thy Body is gone, and Flesh consumed be,
Thy Spirit with thy God doth live to all Eternitie;
Where from thine Eyes all Tears are wip'd, and Joy for ere is found,
And Cloth'd now art with Garments pure, and Pleasures doth abound:
And from thine Enemies reach, which did thee sore annoy,
Who for the sake of Truth they sought thy Body to destroy;
Thou now exalted art over all Mortallity,
Where neither ravenous Beast, nor yet the voulterus Eye,
Can ever thee molest, no nor disquiet thy peace,
Which as a River great doth flow, and never more shall cease;
Ah thou Valiant, one indeed, who never turn'd aside,
But to thy God wert faithful found, when ever thou wert tride,
Great is our want of thee, for which my Soul doth cry,
Unto the Lord our God who only can supply;

Oh

Oh righteous God make up our loss, to thee I only pray,
That thou wouldst please to raise up Children to him this day,
And fill them with thy Grace, and therein make them shine
Forth in thy most glorious Power, both heavenly and divine,
That so thy holy Truth for which he did engage,
May over all exalted be now in this latter age;
And though our loss of him be great, who still do here abide,
Yet in our God we are compleat while we in Truth reside;
In which the living God preserve, and from the World defend
All those that put their trust in him, and keep them to the end,
That in the closure of our Days our Heads in peace may ly,
And fill'd our Mouths may be with Pray'rs unto the Lord on hy,
Who over all is worthy, and only prais'd be he
That never waxeth old, nor ever Changed can be.

Walton *the 30th of the 8th Month* 1684.

Edmond Croix.

Six

Six Verſes *writ by another Hand.*

WAs ever *Duſt* more Dignified
while t'was a Houſe of Clay,
For heavenly Life did there abide
its Vertue to diſplay.

An Humble, Meek and Harmleſs Soul,
within this *Duſt* did dwell,
Which all the Glory of this World
abundance did excell.

This *Duſt* on Earth it had a Name
whilſt it on Earth did move,
But that ſame Life which mov'd the ſame
theirs few do know or Love.

The *Duſt* is left, the *Soul* is gone
in Life for ay to dwell,
From ſight of every mortal one,
in Glory to excell.

Thy *Duſt* within the Earth do ly,
my *Duſt* ſhall ly by thine,
Our Souls in Life ſhall dwell on high,
our Fellowſhip divine.

And though by Death we leave our *Duſt*,
our Souls remain forever,
And from the Spirits of the Juſt
no worldly Power can ſever.

William

William Peart
HIS
TESTIMONY
CONCERNING
William Bennit.

Reader,

MAny has been the faithful Witneſſes which God hath raiſed in his day (bleſſed be his holy Name) that hath been truly honoured with his Power and living Preſence, in which they have gone forth in his Work and Service, in order to the gathering in of his numberleſs Number, which he is a gathering from the ends of the Earth, to Inhabit in his new *Jeruſalem*, that heavenly City come down from God, the City of the Saints Solemnity, where the living Praiſes are continually ſung to the God of *Zion*, the King of *Saints*, to whom be aſcribed all Honour and living Praiſes, as is due ſaith my Soul, forever, *Amen*.

Now Friends, many of theſe Embaſſadors and Agents for the King of Heaven, it hath pleaſed his heavenly Majeſty to end their Commiſſion, by calling them home, ſo that place

of

of rest prepared for the Faithful (where the oppression of the Oppressor ceaseth, and not so much as his voice heard, himself being forever shut out) the Memorial of them is blessed, their Names will be honorable in Ages yet to come, and the Children yet unborn will bless the Lord on their behalfs; much might be writ in a general way, as to those worthy Witnesses before mentioned; but that which is before, and chiefly at this time upon me, is to leave a Testimony to Posterity (that lives in my Heart) concerning that faithful Servant of God, and of his People, and worthy Minister of Christ Jesus, dear William Bennit, a man indeed of a meek *Moses* like Spirit, in whom the Lord had in a large measure fulfilled his Promise (*viz.*) to make a man more pure then fine Gold, yea then the golden Wedg of *Ophir*; for indeed the Lord had tryed him in the Furnice of Affliction, and had in a large measure purified him from the Dross or earthly mixture, and made him a chosen Vessel, fit for his own use, for saith *Solomon*, *When the Silver is refined from the Dross, there is a Vessel for the Refiner*, as this good man was a Vessel of honour fitted for that use whereunto the Lord had called him, which was, to bear a living Testimony for his Name, in which he was found very faithful, not in Word and Doctrine only, but in Life and Conversation also, in which he shined as a Light upon a Candlestick, which gives a Light to all which be in the Room; so was the godly Life of this ever blessed man, of which I am Treating it gave a Light easie to be discerned by all who are of the Family & Houshold of Faith; nay, his and Truth's Enemies see it, and were made oft-times to confess it, and say, that he was a man of an Honest, Godly & Upright Life, such a Luster & Brightness did it cast, that Truth was greatly honored by it, not only in the Town of *Woodbridge* where he dwelt, but where ever he came or was known, his Life preached Truth, his Carriage was Innocent, his Words were very Savoury, favouring

favouring of what his Heart and inward parts was filled with, which miniſtered Grace to his Hearers.

And as to that Teſtimony that God had given him to bear for his Name in Word and Doctrine, he was very faithful in it, and was oft-times drawn in the Love of God to travel upon the account of it, in great Weakneſs and Infirmneſs of Body, which for the moſt part poſſeſſed him, but great was the Strength and Vigor of his inward man, which oft-times, as it were, ſwallowed up the weakneſs of the outward man: I have often ſeen him go into a Meeting when it was thought he had more need have been in Bed; ſuch many times was his Weakneſs and Illneſs, but ſtrong was that Love in which he was drawn forth to ſerve the Lord his God, which oft-times in the Aſſemblies of God's People flowed from him as ſweet ſtreams from a pleaſant Fountain, to the great refreſhment of the right Seed, and nouriſhment of the true Birth, in the ſence of which his Heart was often filled with that ſtrength of Life and heavenly Courage, that he would appear like a Gyant greatly refreſht with new VVine, ready to run a Race, where there was no appearance of the bodily weakneſs as before; but when his Teſtimony hath been ended, and Service for that time over, he hath been like one ready to give up the Ghoſt, his before-mentioned weakneſs again repoſſeſſing his earthly Houſe of Clay, by which I have often obſerved, how in a wonderful manner (as to the outward man) the mighty Power of God attended the bleſſed Teſtimony, and acceptable Service of this Servant of Chriſt; he was a worthy and honorable Inſtrument in the hand of the Lord, and many were turned to the Lord by him; for the Lord of the Vinyard imployed him therein, both to Plant and VVater, he being very well accompliſhed and fitted for both, being thereunto educated by the Power of God in the School of Chriſt: He delighted much in breaking up of untill'd Ground, often having

Meetings where there was never any by Friends before, and the Lord very much bleſſed and proſpered his Labour in that very reſpect in adding to his Church thereby: He was indeed the Father of many Children, who were begotten by him into the Faith of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; God had given him a ready Utterance, his Tongue was as the Pen of a ready Writer, often minding Friends of the day wherein they firſt received the Truth, & to remember their firſt Love, that though they had known much, & experienced much, & had witneſſed a large encreaſe in the Riches of God's Kingdom, yet to remember that in which God firſt appeared (*viz.*) the meaſure of Gods Gift (or Grace) in their Hearts, there to ſtay their Minds, often mentioning the command of God to *Jacob*, who after many Tryals, Travels and Exerciſes, and after God had given him great encreaſe of Riches, as Flocks and Herds, Wives and Children, which he devided into three Bands (in order to meet his Brother *Eſau*) admiring the goodneſs of the God of his Fathers who had given him all that Riches, who only with his Staff (did ſome time before) travelled over *Jordan*; yet after all this, God commanded him to go to *Bethel*, the place where the Lord at firſt appeared to him, when he fled from his Brother *Eſau*, there to dwell, and erect an Alter, and call upon his Name: He often had it upon him to put Friends in mind of ſpeaking the true Language, to ſay *thee* or *thou* to a ſingle Perſon, without reſpect of Perſons, the contrary being falſe, and ſo out of the Truth; it was likewiſe much upon him to exhort Friends to feel the concern of Truth upon their Spirits, that in the true ſence thereof they might feel the drawing of the Love of God to Meet and Aſſemble themſelves together in his Name and Fear, and that they might truly know and underſtand the end of their meeting, and what God therein requires of them, that they might not go to Meetings as many People go to their Church (as they call it) to be a little ſerious while

while they are there, and when they are gone thence let their minds out, as if they had left their God behind them, such a coming to meetings would not stand any one in stead in a time of Exercise, or a day of Tryal; much might be writ, as to the good Exhortations, Admonitions, Advice and good Counsel which oftentimes opened in his Heart in the Meetings and Assembles of Friends, but I must refer my friendly Reader to the persual of his Cordial and Soul refreshing Epistles (as in the Life they are Read, by which they were given forth) for his or her further satisfaction; only I cannot pass by, as not to mention his frequent wrestlings in Prayer with the Lord for the good of all, but more especially for those of the Houshold of Faith, not forgetting the Sufferers of all sorts, whether in Body or in Mind, particularly such as suffer Imprisonment for the Testimony of a good Conscience; he often prayed that God would be pleased to make the Prison as a Pallace to them, through the incomes of his heavenly Life and blessed Presence in and to their Souls; and such as lay upon a Bed of Sickness, that God would be their Comfort; such as travelled by Sea or Land in the Work or Service of the Lord, that he would be their Support, and by his living Power and Presence them accompany, that their Service might be effectual,& they enabled with cheerfulness to undergo what it should please God to permit or suffer to befal them for their Testimony sake; he often interceeded with God for his very Enemies, (having learned that Lesson to love Enemies) that it would please the Lord to turn their Hearts, and to open their Eyes, that they may see against whom they are striving, and against whom they are setting themselves in battle aray, as Bayers & Thorns against consuming Fire, that they might behold him whom with their Sins they had Pierced, & whom in his Members they had Persecuted, that they might mourn over him, and if it were the will of God Repent, Return, be Converted and

Healed; he oft remembred this the Land of his Nativity in his Suplications to God, that it would pleaſe him, if ſo it ſeemed good in his ſight, to prevent thoſe impending Judgments (that hang over it, ready like a dreadful Tempeſt to break, and fall upon it) by its ſpeedy Repenting, and breaking off from thoſe great Sins and Evils that abound and ſuper-abound in it (which in Nature ſeem to Equal, if not Exceed the Sins of *Sodom*) and that it would pleaſe God, if that it ſeemed good in his ſight, to fruſtrate, confound and bring to nought the devices, contrivances and conſultations of that wicked Spirit, and thoſe wicked Inſtruments that device, contrive and conſult its Overthrow and Deſtruction. Thus did the Love of God flow from the Heart of this Servant of his, not only to Friends, but to Enemies, having ſo learned of his Maſter Chriſt Jeſus, whom he faithfully ſerved in his Generation, and with whom he forever reſteth.

Now Friends, having hinted ſomething of the Teſtimony this good man bore for God in Life and Converſation, and alſo in Word and Doctrine, having a diſpenſation of the Word of Life committed to him to declare to others, he being an able Miniſter of the ſame; now it remains to ſpeak ſomething of his Teſtimony he bore for God in Suffering; it was not only given him to Believe, but to Suffer for the Name of Chriſt, in which, by the permiſſion of God, he had a large ſhare, eſpecially by Impriſonment, which many times was long and tedious, had he not been ſupported by the Power of God, for whoſe Cauſe he Suffered, and in whoſe Will he was truly contented to undergo what wicked men were permitted to inflict upon him, for his Conſcience ſake towards God, eying the Will of God in all, in which was his Peace and true laſting Satisfaction; the principal places of his Impriſonment were at *Yarmouth*, *Norwich-Caſtle*, *Blibro*, *Melton*, *Ipſwich* and *Edmonds-Bury*; in the laſt of which he remained a cloſe Priſoner, ſcarce

ſetting

ſetting his Foot over the Threſhold in five Years time; he was ſeveral times a Priſoner in *Melton* Goal, as likewiſe in the County Goal at *Ipſwich*, where he breathed his laſt Breath, in which two places latterward my ſelf, with ſeveral of our Friends in and about *Woodbridg*, were Priſoners with him; as particularly in this Perſecution, which began five Years ſince by *Edmond Brume*, Prieſt of *Woodbridg*, but committed by Juſtice *Bacon*, and Juſtice *Bohon*, for refuſing to take an Oath, where he remained Priſoner about half a Year; but after ſome breathing ſpace, our old Perſecuting Adverſary, Prieſt *Brume*, began afreſh to breath out his Threatnings, like the Perſecutors of old, and getting a Juſtice for his turn, began to ſtir up the Town Officers, and diſturb our Meeting (who of themſelves might be unwilling) and upon the 12th day of the 6th month 1683 there came to our Meeting the aforeſaid Officers, where our dear Friend *William Bennit* was upon his Knees in Prayer to God, from which he was violently haled away, by one *Robert Chapman*, a Conſtable (being put forward thereto by *John Firman* Churchwarden) and with ſeveral others of us taken out of our peaceable Meeting at *Woodbridg*, and carried before *Edmond Jenny* of *Bredfeild* Juſtice, who committed us to *Melton* Goal, for being at a Quaker-Meeting (which is contrary to Law) as ſaith the Mittimas; at which this innocent man greatly rejoyced, that the Lord ſee it meet for him to bear his Teſtimony in this ſuffering time, among his Friends & Brethren at home (becauſe it was reported he ſhould be ſent to *Edmonds-Bury* Goal) and in the aforeſaid Priſon at *Melton* he was kept very cloſe, and the next Seſſions at *Woodbridg* he was brought into the Court, where an Indictment was preferr'd againſt him for being Rioteuſly and Routeuſly aſſembled, with many others, *&c.* to which (after many ſound Reaſons and Argruments to prove our Meetings Innocent, without any other deſign, but purely to Wait upon, and Wor-

ſhip

ship the Lord, as good experience hath ſhewn; and therefore no way Hurtful, or Dangerous to the Goverment, *&c.)* he pleaded not Guilty; it was demanded whether or no he would give Bail for his appearance the next quarter Seſſions, & to be of the good Behaviour, which he refuſed to do, knowing he had not Miſ-behaved himſelf; ſo he was again returned to Priſon, and kept very cloſe, and when the next Seſſions came about, at *Woodbridg*, he was again brought into the Court, where *Chriſtopher Melton* of *Ipſwich* was Chairman (as at the Seſſions before) where he with ſome other Friends was put on to Tryal, and after a great deal of arguing between the Priſoners and the Court, the Jury went out, and after a conſiderable time returned, and being asked whether the Priſoners were Guilty or not Guilty, the Foreman anſwered not Guilty, at which the Chairman was highly diſpleaſed, and perſwaded them, at the Bar, to alter their Verdict, that they were guilty of an unlawful Aſſembly, a practice how juſt I ſhall leave to the Judgment of the Impartial Reader; and as if this were not uſeage hard enough, they deviſed another piece of Cruelty, which was to remove him to *Ipſwich* to be fined, and in a very cold day in the ſharpeſt of this laſt Winter (which for exceſs of Cold, the like cannot be remembered) when it was late, in the latter part of the Day, Snowing very faſt all the way he went, ſo that before he got to the Priſon it was late in the Evening, and being many of us there, for want of Beds, and for want of timely notice to have made Proviſion, among others of us, this tender man was forced to ſet up all Night in that wet and cold Condition, and then he was called upon at that Seſſions in *Ipſwich*, and fined twenty Pound (at which he was no ways diſmayed) and ſo he was returned to Priſon till he ſhould pay his Fine, where he meet with hard uſage from the Jayler, he not anſwering his unreaſonable demands, & remained cloſe Priſoner until the next Seſſions at *Ipſwich*, where he

he was again called into the Court, and nothing of the Fine ſpoken of, but *Thomas Covel* Clark of the Peace told him, they had a particular order from the King to deal with him; then he was profferred the Oath of Allegance, which he refuſing, he was again returned to Priſon; after which, in ſome ſhort time, it pleaſed the Lord to viſit him with more then ordinary Sickneſs, which more and more encreaſed upon him, in which time he deſired to ſee ſeveral of his dear Friends, as he ſaid, before he dyed, thereby ſignifying his departure to be at hand; and ſo upon the twenty third day of the fourth Month 1684, about three in the Morning, like an innocent man, he laid down his Head in peace with God, & dyed a faithful Sufferer for Chriſt Jeſus, in a Teſtimony againſt the Perſecutors of our Age; and my deſire is, that his innocent Blood may not be laid to the charge of them that had a hand in his laſt Suffering, in which he ſealed his Teſtimony with his Life: And there is one thing yet with me, concerning my deceaſed Friend, which is worthy of Obſervation; that is, when even Perſecution was ſtirred up among us, if he had happened to have been from home upon the publick ſervice of Truth, when once he heard of it, he was not ſatisfied until he got home, to get his Shoulder to the Work; ſuch was his care and reſpect to his Teſtimony at home, in a time of Suffering, the which makes our loſs and want of him to be very great, eſpecially at ſuch a time as this, when ſuffering for the Truth abounds, in which he was a good Pattern; and indeed, time will diſcover the want of him more then at preſent it is by ſome perceived (the Lord make up, and reſtore our loſs according to his own good will and pleaſure) though his bodily Preſence be removed from us, yet his Life is felt to remain, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord. As at the very hour of his departure, his dear Wife, with ſeveral other Friends, ſitting by the Corps, the Life newly departed, very ſorrowful for their great loſs, though his great gain; I ſay, as they

thus

thus sate, in retiredness of Mind, the Love & Life of God broke in upon them, in an abundant manner, to their great Refreshment and Satisfaction, which signified thus much, that though he had taken away his Servant from them, yet his Life should remain; and it will remain with them that walk worthy of it, for it is a never failing Treasure.

And thus Friends I have given you a brief account of the Life, Sufferings and End of this Messenger of Christ, who hath delivered his Message, and done the Work of God in his Day; and Friends, that which remains to us is, that we may be found in our Day working the Work of God, in answering the Requirings of God, that so we may come to finish our Course with Joy, and lay down our Heads in Peace, as this Servant of God did, which is the desire of your Friend.

Woodbridge the 24th of the 5th Month 1684. William Peart.

A

A COLLECTION OF Certain Epiſtles OF Divine Conſolation, &c.

Dear Father and Mother,

MY Indeared Love abounds towards you, and in that which hath brought me into true obedience to God and Man, do I ſalute you, and am preſent with you, as you come to be gathered thereunto; even into the ſpirit of holineſs, in which is the unity of the Faithful, into which Spirit wait to feel your growth, and your obedience therein more and more, which growth ſtandeth not in Words, but in Life and in Power; and wait to feel your increaſe therein, and decreaſe in Words which are out of the Power of God; many have grown rich

in Words, and accounted that their growth without the Life, and have feed upon the Knowledge more then upon Life, and unto such the Famine is to come; therefore dear Hearts, yea exceeding dear to me, oh keep to the measure of God in your own Particulars, and be obedient to its operation, that you may come to witness your translation into the Birth Immortal, which translation standeth not in Words, but in Life and Power; therefore feel the operation of the Power of God to work out and mortifie that which is reproveable by it; oh, obedience to the operation thereof is required by it of the Creature; for as it is to work upon the Soul, so it worketh not without the Soul's yeilding obedience thereunto, so far as to work its translation, yet not the Soul's work, but the work of God in and upon the Soul; for though Christ is come a Light into the World, and is the Salvation of God, yet they that believe not in him, he is their Condemnation, and yet sufficient Salvation to them who believe in him, and obey him; for as the Light manifesteth Evil, yet if the Creature yeild not obedience thereunto, he cannot have Power over the Evil; but if he yeild obedience to the Light, it gives him power over Evil, yet not the Creatures Power, but the Power of God, which begetteth the Will and the Deed also; therefore perfect obedience to the Light the Lord requireth of every one, and daily to Watch and Wrestle against that which is condemnable by the Light, for so long as the Creature knowingly lives in that (whether in Words or Deeds) that it feeth to be reproveable by the Light, it cannot injoy perfect peace with God; for the peace of God is enjoyed in the Light, and truely if that Condemn, surely the Lord doth not Justifie, though many believe they are Justified in the sight of God, through Christ, although the Witness of God let them see that they are yet in their Sins, and condemns them for Sin, and

this

this Faith (or rather Unbelief) which leads them to believe that they, nor none else can be made free from all Sin on this side the Grave, and yet they imagin that they are free from it in the sight of God; but beware of that Faith, for it is accursed, and is not the true Faith which is the gift of God, which through Christ saveth from all Sin; for that Faith admits of Sin, but the Faith of Gods Elect sets free from all Sin; for where the Wicked one hath seated this Faith on Perswasion in the Heart, it is hard indeed for such a one to come to Live in the Life of Truth, which is holy; for as the Light doth let the Soul see it is in its Sins, and brings Trouble and Condemnation upon the Mind for Sin, and begets a desire also in the Heart to be freed from Sin, for it feels it lie as a weighty load upon its Conscience; behold even then the Wicked one, who hath begot this perswasion in the Creature that it cannot be freed from all Sin here, though freed from Sin in the sight of God; and this perswasion causes the Creature to do dispite to the Spirit of Grace, and strive to quench its Reproofs, and so get at ease in that cursed Faith, and in that wrong Believe, and sit down short of the Peace of God; so that which begot desires in the Creature to be freed from Sin, comes to be vailed and slain, and many Thousands are in this State, who are large Boasters, who are boasting that they are Justified by Christ, and that Christ hath done all for them, and if they can believe it, that is sufficient, and yet still in their Sins.

Now the Apostle *Paul* saith, *If while we seek to be Justified by Christ, we our selves be found Sinners; Is Christ therefore the Minister of Sin? God forbid*; and he saith, *Shall we continue in Sin that Grace may abound? God forbid*; *for how can we who are Dead to Sin Live any longer therein?* and he said, *They who are Justified by Faith, through the Redemption that is in*

Christ Jesus, which Redemption is a redeeming out of Sin, and their Faith gave them power over the World, and did not admit of Sin, as the Professors Faith doth, who believe they can never be free from all Sin in this Life.

Oh, in tender Love I beseech you to beware of that Delution and Perswasion of the Wicked one, for it is very dangerous, and a broad way which the Creature is prone to run into; now there is a great difference betwixt such who with the Light seeth much Sin (which they are addicted unto) yet to be subdued, and it is their sore Burden, and they in the strength of the Light wrestle against it, and so feel it daily decrease; and that Faith begot, by which they see and believe that they shall be made Conquerors over all, as they abide faithful to the Light, which lets them see Sin: I say there is a great difference betwixt such as are there in that State (travelling out of Sin, out of *Egypt*, where the Bondage is, towards *Sion*, where the Freedom is) and such as are sate down satisfied, in a false Confidence, and in a wrong Belief, continuing in their Sins, and believe they shall not be free from it here, but you know otherwise; therefore in the Life of what you know abide, for truly it is the Life that must make alive, and keep alive to God, which Life is the Light of men, the true Light which lighteth every one that cometh into the World, and is the Salvation of God; and therein wait and feel your Minds exercised in its operation, for this changeth the Mind, the Thoughts, the Affections and Desires; for as they have been Earthly, so they become Heavenly, and it becomes the Souls delight to answer the end of the Lord, and to endeavour to walk worthy of his Love, and it becomes its Life to do the Will of God, and to follow the Leadings of his Spirit, which leadeth out of Evil; but before this be witnessed the strait and narrow Way must be known,

known, felt and lived in, and there muſt be a paſſing through the Fire, through the Water, through the one Baptizing, which baptiſeth into Death, and ſo tranſlateth into Life, in which Life it will become your Life to do the Will of God.

Oh, dear *Father* and *Mother*, keep, I beſeech you, to the Gift of God in your own particulars, and be obedient to its Leadings, and therein watch diligently, continually, and with it try your Thoughts, and Words, and Intents, before you bring them forth, and if they be reprovable give them up to the Light, the Fire, to be conſumed; dear Hearts, it is in unexpreſſible Love that I write thus unto you; and be very wary of ſpaking things by contraries, which you are addicted to, for there is no Lye of the Truth, and he that abideth in the Truth is preſerved out of the Lye, he that loveth the Light bringeth his Deeds to the Light to try them, whether they be wrought in God; ſo be not forward to utter Words, but feel the Light of Chriſt to guide and lead you, and bring your Thoughts and Words to it, to try them, whether you may ſpeak them yea or nay; now if they be reprovable by the Light, then they are to dye, and not be brought forth, for if they be, this grieveth the Righteous Spirit of God, and breaks your Peace with the Lord, for if his Witneſs Condemn, he doth not Juſtifie; ſo the Creature keeping low in the pure Fear and Dread of the Lord, it dare not do that, whether in Thought, Word or Deed, which it ſeeth to be Vain and Evil, if it could gain the whole World by it; but truly the Profeſſors are out of this Condition, though they can talk of the Fear of the Lord, and ſcarce one of a Thouſand is come there, into that ſtate, but this is a hard ſaying, who is able to bear it? yet it is a true ſaying, though they will not believe it; oh, the largeſt Talkers, and Declarers,

clarers, and Knowers, even of the highest sort, are farthest from the Life of Truth, which is holy; for truly such are settled on their Lees, and have been building long, and very high, and have gathered much Riches, and it is hard for these to loose all, and their Building to fall, and not one Stone to be left upon another, but all to be thrown down; oh, the Lord God of Compassion is a gathering many tender Hearts from amongst them, who hunger and breath after him, and is not satisfied with the Husks, the Shadows and Dead Forms, in which they dwell, and poor Hearts, they have been long running from Mountain to Hill, and have sought after the Lord, even fervently, Day after Day, Year after Year, and could not find him whom their Souls longed for; but now such is the Lord a gathering into his Fold where they shall enjoy their Shepherd, and their Souls shall not want.

So once more do I in tender Love direct you to the Gift of God in your own particulars, and therein wait upon the Lord for Power, from the Lord, over that which is contrary to the Lord, and condemnable by his Light in your own Hearts; and keep in the fewness of Words, for too many Words becometh not those who professeth Godliness; but let your Words be few, and let them savour of the Grace of God, which leadeth into a Meek, Sober, Modest, Chast Life, that so your upright sober Conversation may preach Righteousness, even to the convincing of them who have been as Teachers over you, whom ye will come to see, as you keep to the measure of God, and know them to be a People whose Minds are at Liberty, and are at ease in the Flesh, and know not a Stay to their Minds, a Stop to their Thoughts, a Bridle to their Tongues, which if they be not come to know, feel and abide therein, let their

Knowledge

Knowledge never ſo large, their Declarations never ſo high, their Words never ſo deep, yea and true alſo; yet I ſay, and my ſaying is true, though hard to many to bear (that if ſuch come not, and keep not to that which is to be a Stay to the Mind, a Stop to their Thoughts, a Brible to their Tongues, a Lanthorn to their Feet, a Light to their Steps;) their Knowledge, their Declarations, their Works and their Sufferings, it is all in vain; and a Babe of the Heavenly Birth ſees and comprehends them, and their large Coverings are to narrow to hide them from their Eye: Well, into the hand of the Lord do I commit you, for to come to be gathered into, and preſerved in the pure Fear of God, Watchful and Diligent in the Light, and to War and Wreſtle in the ſtrength of it, againſt that which you ſee is to be Mortified; ſo be willing to paſs through the ſtrait Gate, into the narrow Way to walk, which few findeth, and are made willing to walk therein; *But the Firſt ſhall be Laſt, and the Laſt Firſt, for many are Called, and but few Choſen.*

And dear Ones, one thing more I have to ſay unto you, beware and take heed of Condemning one another for doing that Evil which you ſee your ſelves are addicted unto, but firſt ſee it Subdued and Mortified in your ſelves, whether it be in Word or Action, before you Condemn others for it, though they be Prophane People; and when you ſpake a Word of Reproof to any, beware of doing it in a light Frothy way, as many do, even in the light Airy Spirit, which bringeth forth the ſame things in themſelves; but let it be done in the Sober, Solled, Seaſoned, Savoury, Holy Spirit of the Lord God, that it may reach to the VVitneſs of God in them

them unto whom you ſpeak, and then is it profitable; ſo the Lord God Almighty, Infinite and VViſe, preſerve me, and you, and all his little Ones, in his holy Awe and Dread, and therein to paſs the time of our Pilgrimage here in Fear and Trembling, Farwell.

From your Son, who is come into the Heirſhip of Eternity,

Bliborough *Goal the 5th Month* 1661.

William Bennit.

A tender and unfained Salutation of Love and Good-will to Profeſſors, &c.

THe Lord God Almighty, hath, and is a looking down upon the Sons and Daughters of Men; and hath, and doth behold many of them, even as poor ſcattered Sheep without a Shepherd, wandering as in the Deſarts and waſte howling Wilderneſs, wandering as upon the barren Mountains, and dry Heaths; hungry and thirſty, their ſouls unſatisfied, ſeeking diligently for food upon the barren Mountains; running from Mountain to Mountain, and from Hill to Hill, and cannot find that Food that will truly ſatisfy their hungry Souls; and running from one broken Ciſtern to another, and cannot find one drop of water that will truly refreſh their thirſty Souls; who are ſeeking the living God amongſt the dead Forms, and ſeeking Meat among the Shells, and the Subſtance among the Shadows, and cannot find that which they ſeek after, nor enjoy him whom their Souls longeth for; ſeeking reſt and can find no true Reſt; deſiring to know where the Lord God (the good Shepherd of *Iſrael*) feeds his Sheep and Lambs, and where they lie down in quietneſs and reſt, free from the fear of Evil.

And this the Lord God of pity hath ſeen, and in his Infinite tender bowels, hath been (and now is) moved with yearnings of pity and compaſſion towards them, and for his own Seeds ſake he hath, and is (in Mercy to them) ſtretching forth the Hand of his loving kindneſs unto them; to gather (in one) the ſcattered, to gather together (in one) the diſperſed, to bring home the wanderer, and the prodigal (that hath long fed upon the Ezek. 34. 11, &c

husks among the Swine) to the Fathers house of plenty, where there is bread enough, and water faileth not.

Yea, the Lord God Almighty, of Heaven and Earth, hath, and is lifting up an Ensign for the Nations, and hath, and will assemble the out-casts of *Jacob*, and the dispersed *Judah*, from the four corners of the Earth, and hath, and will return the Captivity of his People; and then *Jacob* shall be glad, and *Israel* shall rejoyce in him (the steam of *Jesse*) which doth and shall stand for an Ensign for the people and unto him doth, and shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest is, and shall be sweet and glorious to the poor, for whom he will Judge in Righteousness; and Reprove with Equity, for the meek of the Earth; who will smite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth, and with the breath of his Lips will he slay the Wicked, and Rule the Nations with his Iron Rod, and break the Heathen to pieces like a Potters Vessel; who hath Righteousness for the girdle of his Loins, and Faithfulness the girdle of his Reins; who hath on the Breastplate of Righteousness, and a Helmet of Salvation on his Head; who hath put on the Garment of Vengeanee for cloathing, and is clad with Zeal as with a Cloak; who with the two-edged sword that proceeds out of his mouth, makes War in Righteousness; who hath on a Vesture dipt in blood, and his Name is called the *Word of God*. This is he whom the Lord giveth for a Covenant of the people, and for a light of the Gentiles, to be his Salvation to the ends of the Earth, to open the Blind eyes, to unstop the Deaf ears, to cause the tongue of the Dumb to sing, and the Lame to leap as an Heart; to cause water to come forth of the Desert, and streams in the Wilderness; the parched ground to become a pool, and dry heaths springs of water; to make the Wilderness and the solitary place glad, and the Desert to rejoyce, and blossom as a Rose;

Psal. 14. 7.

Psal. 2. 8. 9.

Rev. 19. 13
Isa. 42. 6, 7.
& 49. 6.
Luk. 2. 30, 31, 32
Isa. 35. 5, 6, 7.

Roſe; who is anointed of God to Preach glad Tidings to the poor, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the poor Captive, and to comfort the Isa. 61. 1, 2, 3. the Mourners in *Sion*; to give beauty for aſhes, the oyl of Joy for Mourning, the garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of heavineſs; that they may flouriſh as Trees of Righteouſneſs of the Lords own planting, bringing forth fruit unto him 1 Sam. 2. that he (in and through them) may be glorified. 4, 5, 6, 7. He brake the bowes of the Mighty, and that which is weak and feeble, he girds with Strength and Courage; the Full and Rich, he cauſes to hire out for bread, and cauſeth the hunger of the hungry to ceaſe; who cauſeth the barren to bear ſeven, and ſhe that hath had many children, to wax barren and feeble; he woundeth and healeth, he killeth and cauſeth to live; he bringeth down, and raiſeth up, even the poor he raiſeth out of the duſt, and the beggar from the dunghil, to ſet them among the Princes, and to inherit a Crown of Glory.

This is he, who maketh all things a New, and Rev. 21. 5. cauſeth all old things to paſs away, who cauſeth Isa. 65. 17. the old Heavens, and the old Earth to paſs away, and dryeth up the Sea; and creates a new Heaven, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs; this is he which worketh the ſtrange work, the marvelous work, which cauſeth the ears of thoſe that hear thereof to tingle: This is he who is the ſtrong Arm of Gods Mighty Power, which is ſtretched forth towards the helpleſs, to deliver the poor and needy out of the hand of him who is too ſtrong for them; Isa. 52. 10. The Arm of Gods Salvation, which he is making bare before the eyes of the Captives, that they may ſee him, and come unto him who is Mighty, upon whom help is laid to deliver them, and to ſave to the utmoſt them that come unto him; this (as I ſaid) is the hand of Gods loving kind-

ness, which in mercy is stretched forth towards you, who cannot be satisfied with the husks, shells, and shadows, but thirst and desire after him the Substance, the living Bread which the living Soul feeds upon and lives, and grows up thereby into Eternal life.

Ah dear People! this is the Salvation of God whom I declare of, and Salvation is not to be had in another besides him, who is the Immortal word of Eternal life which abides for ever; which was in the beginning before the visibles were, by whom all things were made, whether visible or invisible, and without him was nothing made that was made; and in him (the Word) was life, and this life is the light of men, and he is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and was in the world, and the world knew him not. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but unto them that received him, he gave power to become the Sons of God.* Who had a body prepared him, in which he suffered the Will of him that sent him; who was born of the Virgin *Mary*, whom King *Herod* sought to destroy, who was circumcised the eighth day, and likewise baptised by *John* the Baptist, who likewise eat the Passeover with his Disciples, (for he came to fulfil all Righteousness) who was betrayed by *Judas*, who was judged to die by *Pontius Pilate*, who was Crucified without the Gates of *Jerusalem*, who was laid in a Sepulcher, who rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, who ascended up into Heaven, and sitteth at the Right hand of God who is glorified with the same Glory that he had with the Father before the world began; who came again unto his Disciples according to his promise; who said unto them, *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you: I will send you a Comforter that shall abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. I am*

Luk. 2. 29, 30.

Joh. 1. 1 &c.

Joh. 14. 16, 18, 26.

the

the Truth (ſaith Chriſt) whom the world cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him; but you know him, for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be (Mark) *in you; yet a little while and the world ſees me no more:* (Mark this) you who are ſo much gazing and looking for his coming without, (but ſtill fail of your expectation) that you know not his coming within you to be a Comforter. *But you ſee me, and becauſe I live you ſhall live alſo,* (ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples) *and in that day you ſhall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I* (Mark) *in you; and he the Spirit of Truth, ſhall lead you into all Truth, and ſhall teach you all things, and ſhall ſhew you all things to come, and bring all things to your remembrance that I have ſaid unto you, and ſhall reprove the world of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgement:* And his Diſciples according to his command, waited at *Jeruſalem* until they were indued with power from on high, and had received the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, the Spirit of Truth, which cauſed them to ſpeak the wonderful things of God, as the Eternal Spirit of Truth gave them utterance; and then they were come to witneſs his Word fulfilled, when he ſaid, *He dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you;* and this is the immortal Word which was in the beginning, which *Paul* (who witneſſed Chriſt the Son of God revealed in him, and was by him the eternal Spirit, made an able Miniſter of him) Preached to wit) Chriſt within, who ſaid, *None ſhould need to aſcend,* that is, to bring Chriſt down from above, *or to deſcend,* that is, to bring Chriſt from beneath, *&c. but the word* (to wit Chriſt) *is nigh thee in the heart, and in the mouth, to be obeyed and done:* and this is the Word of Faith that *Paul* preached nigh in the heart, *Even Chriſt in them the living hope,* that was as an Anchor to their Souls, ſure and ſtedfaſt) *the hope of Glory.*

Luk. 24. 29. Acts, 2. 4. Gal. 1 15, 16. Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8.

And *Paul* exhorted the *Corinthians* to examine themſelves, and

2 Cor 13.5. and to prove themſelves whether they were in the Faith; whether they knew not Chriſt to be in them, except they were Reprobates. And *John* in his writing to the Saints, reminds them of that within, which they had heard from the beginning; and ſays to them, *Let that remain in you*, (to wit, The word which was in the beginning) *which you have heard from the beginning, and if it ſhall remain in you, ye ſhall continue in the Son and in the Father*: and tells them, *That they ſhould not need that any man ſhould teach them, but as the anoynting which they had received of God abiding in them, ſhould teach them*, which was the Truth, (to wit) *Chriſt the Truth in them, the anoynted, the anoynting*: And as he had, and did teach them, ſo they were to abide in him; *ſo they knew Chriſt in them*, & witneſſed the Power of God within, the Truth within, the Word nigh in their hearts, the Spirit of God in their inward parts, by which they were led, guided, taught and inſtructed: *For ſo many as are the Sons of God*, (ſaith *Paul*) *are led by the Spirit of God*; *and he that hath not the Spirit of Chriſt is none of his*: and this gave them an underſtanding in the things of God, even the Spirit of God; *For no man knows the things of God*, [ſaith *Paul*] *but by the Spirit of God, through which he was made an able Miniſter of the New Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit which giveth life.* And he Preached the everlaſting Goſpel, Chriſt the Power of God, the Word nigh in the heart, and ſaid, *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid from them that are loſt, in whom*, [Mark] *in whom the God of the world* [the Prince of the power of the Air, that wicked ſpirit, that worketh in the hearts of the children of diſobedience] *hath blinded their minds, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel* [Chriſt Jeſus] *ſhould ſhine in, and unto them*: But God, who commandeth light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined [Mark] in our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jeſus; and we

1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12

have

have this treasure in the Earthen vessel, *that the glory may be of God, and not of us:* so the Saints Preached up Christ [the Word of Life, the Light, the Truth] within, and said, *That which is is to be known of God, is manifest in them*: and *Paul* says, *That the manifestation of the Spirit, is given to every man to profit withall*; *and the free Grace of God*, saith he [Mark] *that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that we denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* Rom 1. 19. 1 Cor. 12. 7. Tit. 2. 11.

And the Saints, they witnessed their reconciliation, and were born again; they felt and knew that in themselves, of which they were born again even Christ in them, the Seed incorruptible the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever; by which they were begotten again unto God, and quickened by the Word of life, even they who were once as dead stones, were raised up as living Children unto *Abraham*; and so they came to taste that the Lord was good and gracious; to taste and handle of the Word of Life, and to feed upon the Bread of Life, and to drink of the Cup of Blessing, and so by one Spirit were baptised into one body, and were made to drink into one Spirit, wherein they worshipped and served the Lord God, and had Unity with the Lord, in and through the Eternal Spirit, and Unity one with another, which united their Souls unto each other, and unto the Lord God over all, blessed for ever. 1 Pet. 1. 23 24, 25. 1 Cor. 12. 13.

Ah, dear people! you in whose hearts there is true desires, and secret thirstings after the living God; where-ever ye are scattered among the many Sects and people, towards you doth my soul, yea my tender soul yearn and stream with love and good-will; and for your sakes dear people, doth my Soul travel in the womb of Supplication, that you might come

come to enjoy that which you are ſeeking after, and come to poſſeſs that you are thriſting for, and for your ſakes moſtly is this written, in tender bowels of unfeigned love and pity to your ſouls.

And dear people, you that have true deſires in you after the Lord, and hath been ſeeking of him, where you cannot find him; and hath been running from Mountain to Hill and from Hill to Mountain; from one broken Ciſtern to another, from one dead Form to another, but ſtill are unſatisfied, and are ſenſible, that you ſtill [notwithſtanding your long profeſſion and confeſſion of God and Chriſt in words, and notwithſtanding your practicing ſome things that you read of, which the Saints once performed in obedience of the Spirit of Truth which led them thereunto] want the feeling enjoyment of the Love and ſweet Peace of God, and go groaning daily under the burden of the bondage of ſin and corruption, and deſires to be ſet free therefrom. Oh, dear people! retire, retire with your minds inward, you who have been ſeeking a God a far off, and hunting after the Lord without, retire to within, and wait to know the Lord God near you, to know his pure Truth in your inward parts, his pure Spirit in you, to lead and guide you, to teach and inſtruct you; for God is a Spirit, and his teachings are ſpiritual; he muſt be known in Spirit, worſhipped in Spirit and in Truth, not at the Mountain, neither at *Jeruſalem*, not in this ſet Form, nor in the other Form, *As to here, and lo there*, but in the Spirit is the Lord God known and worſhipped aright, by them who are born of the Spirit: And ſo the ſpiritualized people, who are born of the Spirit, and lives in the Spirit, and are taught and led by the Spirit of Truth, theſe are the peculiar people who Worſhip the God of Truth [who is a Spirit] in the Spirit and in the Truth; and theſe are acceptable Worſhippers with the Lord, who own no Worſhip

Joh 4. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Worſhip but his own which he teacheth his people by his Spirit; and they that is ignorant of the Spirit of God, they are ignorant of the true Worſhip of God which is in the Spirit; and although ſuch may ſeem to Worſhip God, yet their Worſhip is not of God, nor accepted with God. It is the purified Sons of *Levy* [who have paſſed through the fire, that are purged even as gold is purged and tryed, and as ſilver is tryed by him [the Light of *Iſrael*] who is as a Refiners Fire, and like Fullers Sope] that can offer unto God an Offering in Righteouſneſs, and their offerings is pleaſant unto the Lord; but the polluted Sacrifices, the halt, the blind, and the lame, is abomination unto the pure God of purity, who is Bleſſed, Bleſſed for evermore. Mal. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. Iſa. 10 17.

And dear People, who have deſires in you after the Lord, towards you doth my bowels yearn, where ever you are ſcattered among the many Sects and heaps, this is a tender invitation unto you that have been ſpending your mony for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which hath not yet ſatisfied your Souls, but ſtill you are a thirſty for want of drink, and an hungry for want of food. Oh, dear people! retire inward, retire inward, hunt no longer abroad, run no longer from one broken Ciſtern to another; wait no longer at the Wells that men have digged, draw no longer at them, for ſtill you thirſt again. But oh! retire to within, turn your minds inward, and wait to find and feel that in you, which you ſo carefully (with ſorrow) hath been ſeeking without you; even to know *Jacob's* Well in you, which hath been dammed up with Earth by the uncircumciſed, whileſt you have been hunting abroad; therefore turn your minds inward to feel the gift that Chriſt gives; the Water that he gives, ſaith Chriſt to the Woman of *Samaria*, *The water which I will give thee, ſhall* [Mark] *be in thee* John 4. 14.

a Well of water ſpringing up unto Eternal life. So the Water that Chriſt gives, it's within; therefore turn inward to his pure gift in your own Hearts, to his pure Light in your own Conſciences, for that comes from him, and leads unto him (them that do it love, follow, and obey) the Fountain of living Water, who ſatisfieth the thirſt of the thirſty, and feedeth the hungry with good things.

Therefore retire inward in your minds, and come unto him, and learn of him who is meek and low in the heart, to wit, *Chriſt in you, except ye be Reprobates:* hearken diligently unto him, and eat ye that which is good, (no longer feed upon the husks) and let your ſouls delight themſelves in fatneſs: come unto him, encline your ear, hear and your Soul ſhall live, and enter into Covenant with him who will be your God, and you ſhall be his people.

Mat. 11. 28, 29, 30. Iſa. 55. 2, 3.

And ſo, dear people, it is not enough for any to have a profeſſion, and a talk of God and Chriſt in words, without the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of him: It is not enough to confeſs and believe that Chriſt died at *Jeruſalem* for ſinners, and he hath done all for you, *&c.* for the drunkard and the ſwearer will ſay as much as this, and make a confeſſion of Chriſt in words as many profeſſors do, who ſay, *They are juſtified by Chriſt, and he hath done all for them*; and yet they are ſtill in their ſins, in the pride, covetouſneſs, vanity, pomp, and vain glory of the world, in it's vain cuſtoms, inventions, and traditions, ſeeking and loving it's honour and reſpect, ſeeking and loving the praiſe of men more then the praiſe of God. But, dear people, it is not enough to confeſs Chriſt without, and ſay you believe in him, *&c.* except you come to know him made manifeſt in you to deſtroy the works of the Devil; for your profeſſing and confeſſing of Chriſt dying at *Jeruſalem*, &c. doth not cleanſe your Hearts, nor ſanctifie your

your Souls, nor purge your Conſciences from dead works, to ſerve the living God in newneſs of life; but ſtill you ſee you are Bond-ſlaves unto ſin and corruption, and led captive with the luſts and deſires of your own hearts; and it will be ſo dear people, until you turn your minds inward, to the pure light of Chriſt in you, that doth diſcover the ſin and corruption of your own hearts; and as you come to believe in that, to love and follow that, you will come to feel and find the working out of the old leaven of ſin, iniquity and corruption, and working you into its nature, and ſo come to ſee, and feel, and witneſs, not only a talk of it, but your Regeneration wrought by Chriſt in you, the Immortal Word, to be born again of it, the Seed incorruptible, which muſt be known within, to bruiſe the Serpents head, the god of the world; the wicked ſpirit that leads man into ſin, which hath been exalted in the heart of man, and hath been Lord, Head, and King there; and the holy Seed, the pure life, that hath ſuffered, that hath been oppreſſed, even as a Cart is oppreſſed with ſheaves, that hath been pierced, wounded and crucified, the Juſt hath ſuffered for the Unjuſt; he hath long been a man of ſorrows, and largely acquainted with grief; he hath been ſmitten, and thou haſt eſteemed him not; but oh! he hath been wounded for, and by thy tranſgreſſions; and bruiſed by, and for thy iniquities; he hath born thy iniquity, whilſt thou like a ſheep haſt gone aſtray, and followed thy own way.

But oh! now return unto the good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his Sheep, and gathereth the ſcattered into the fold of Reſt, where he feeds them, and cauſeth them to lie down in the freſh Paſtures of life, where none can make them afraid; and feed, and ſup with him, who is their daily Bread, their Life, their Reſt, their Joy and Delight.

So dear poople, whoſe deſires are after the Lord, but are

ſeeking for Salvation, and after a God afar off, I beſeech you to return inward, (becauſe I fervently deſire that your Souls might come to taſte of the love and ſweet peace of my God, which is that which would ſatisfie your Souls) and to take heed to that in your hearts, which as light ſhineth in a dark place, diſcovering unto you the deeds of darkneſs, and the works of the night to be evil; and fear not that it will deceive ye, for it is the ſure word of Prophecy, unto which you do well to take heed, until the day dawn in your hearts, and light ſhine out of darkneſs, and wholly extinguiſh the night; and give no heed to them who ſpeak evil of the way of the Lord, and count Truth to be error, and Light darkneſs; even as the profeſſing *Jews*, they boaſted of *Moſes*, and of the Law, and of the Prophets, but when he whom *Moſes* and the Prophets propheſied of, whom the Law did figure out, who fulfills the Law, who was the life of *Moſes* and the Prophets, he came unto them, but they hated him, and ſaid *We Know that God ſpake by* Moſes, *but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is; he is a Gluttoner, a Wine-bibber, a friend to Publicans and Sinners; he through* Beelzebub *the Prince of Devils doth caſt out Devils*, &c, And truly I may ſay, (not out of a prejudiced mind of Enmity towards any, for my Soul bears love and good-will towards all men) that it is (as it were) the ſame now with many of the Profeſſors in this age, who (as the *Jews* made a large boaſt and profeſſion of *Moſes*, the Law, and the Prophets, and hated him the life of them) doth make a large boaſt of Chriſt in words, and of his dying at *Jeruſalem*, (which I believe he did, according as the Scripture teſtifie) and that he hath done all for them, and if they can but believe it, that is enough, *&c.* And yet whileſt they are thus profeſſing him in words, behold many of them are enemies to his Life, and ſo enemies to him whom they boaſt of,

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Mat. 9. 29. the 8. 4, 8. the 12. 24 11 ch. 18. 16.

of, who is the Word that was in the beginning, in whom was life, and his life is the light of men: *The true light*, ſaith *John*, *that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*; vvhich the Profeſſors ſay is a natural light; that vvhich convinceth vvicked men of ſin in their ovvn hearts, and judgeth them for evil doing; it is a natural light ſay the Profeſſors, and ſo call the life of the Word, vvhich is the light of men natural; it's a natural conſcience ſay ſome, it's an inſufficient light, it's a common grace, *&c.* ſo common it is indeed, that (as *Paul* ſays) *it hath appeared unto all men, even that grace that brings Salvation*: nay, ſome blaſphemouſly vvill preſume to ſay, it's a ſpirit of deluſion, a ſpirit of errour; and theſe are under the vvo, vvho call the Truth errour, and the Light darkneſs, and the Good evil; and theſe one day ſhall knovv their blaſphemy, and their vvords ſhall become their burden; and theſe are in great darkneſs and ignorance indeed, thick darkneſs fills their habitation, even the darkneſs of *Egypt*, that may be felt; and it is hard indeed for ſuch to be brought into the pure light and unchangable Truth of God; although vvith the Lord God Almighty nothing is impoſſible; and theſe like the Scribes and Phariſees, vvho, although they profeſſed God in vvords, and ſaid they had one Father even God, ſought to ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven from men, and vvould neither enter in themſelves, nor ſuffer them that vvould: and ſo theſe, vvhile they profeſs Chriſt in vvords, they ſpeak evil of his Light and Truth, and vvill neither ovvn it themſelves, nor ſuffer (as much as in them lie) them that vvould; but cryes out, take heed, bevvare of the light the *Quakers* prate of, it is darkneſs, ſay they, it vvill deceive you, and delude you, and lead you into Errour, &c. But let all people knovv, the light (vvhich the people of God, called *Quakers*, ſpeak of, and in

John 1 9.

Titus 2 11.

Iſa. 5. 20 & 23: 36.

Mat 23. 13.

bovvels

bovvels of love direct peoples minds unto) is the life of the Word, vvhich is Immortal, Eternal, Permanent, Divine, and Immutable, and not Natural.

Joh. 1, & 2 3,9.

Thou, vvhoever thou art, and vvhatever by men thou art accounted of, that doth make a large profeſſion of God, Chriſt, and the Scriptures of Truth in vvords, and doth hate, and ſpeak evil of the Light, the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, thou art a hater of God and of Chriſt, and art of Antichriſt, againſt Chriſt; although thou profeſſeſt him in words, and ſayſt thou art ſaved by him, and juſtified by him, &c. yet if thou hateſt his light in thy own Conſcience, which doth check thee for evil doing, and prick thee for thy ſins in ſecret, thou art in enmity to him, and condemned by the Light, and not juſtified; and thy confeſſion of Chriſt in words will not ſave thee from his Righteous Condemnation, vvhilſt thou hateſt his pure light in thy Conſcience, and thy profeſſion is for the fire, and unto the Light thou muſt come before thou canſt find true peace with the Lord God. Yea, whatever thou art, who art climed, and a climing up in thy Imaginations, and a ſoaring up aloft with the god of the world, (the Prince of the power of the Air) above the Light (the Door into the fold) ſtriving to enter into the fold, and not by the Door, (to wit) the Light, thou art the Thief and Robber, who runs before Chriſt, the Light, the Door into the Fold, and thou muſt come down; come down, to that which appears a ſmall thing in thy eye, (who art ſwell'd big in thy fleſhly wiſdom, from which the things of Gods Kingdom is hid) even to that which thou counts a fooliſh thing, a weak, a poor thing, not worth the minding or heeding; but this is it (the fooliſh thing in thy eye) that is to confound thy wiſdom, and turn it into fooliſhneſs, that ſo thou becoming

John 10.1,8,9.

1 Cor. 1. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. and 19. 20, 21.

becoming a fool, may be made wise in it: This is the weak thing, in thy eye, which is to confound thy strength, and make thee weak, that thou mayst be strong in it, and the poor thing in thy eye, which is to rob thee of all thy Riches, that thou becoming poor, in it may be made Rich; so where is the Wise, the Rabbi, the Scribe, the Disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the Wisdom of this world? for the world by wisdom knows not God; and so the boaster is excluded, that God may have the Glory, and all flesh abased, and silent before him, who of God is made unto his Saints, that love his Light, and are led by his Spirit, Wisdom, Strength, Power, Righteousness, Justification and Redemption, who have the heavenly Treasure in the Earthen vessel, that the glory may be of God, who is worthy of all Glory and Praise for ever.

So heed not (dear people, you who have any desire in you after the Lord) what this man, or the other, saith of the Light; but love the Light, and take heed unto it, for that which judges and condems sin in you, which is that which seperates you from the Lord, and hinders your peace with the Lord, and is the cause of your burden and sorrow; this you shall not need to fear will delude you; That is a spirit of delusion, that leads into sin and evil, beware of that; but that which reproves you for evil in your own hearts, and manifests the deeds of darkness, take heed unto it, for that is the Light that doth make manifest darkness; that which is reprovable is made manifest by the Light; for whatever makes manifest, is Light, and that will not onely make manifest the sin and evil, but as you come to turn your minds in, unto it, and love, and follow it, it will save you from your sins, and redeem your minds and souls unto God; for who receive his Light, his pure Grace in them, they receive power through it to become the Sons of God;

John 3. 20

Eph. 5. 13, 14.

for

for through his Grace doth he manifeſt his power in them that believe in the Light, to the drawing of their hearts and minds out of the ungodlineſs and *worldly* luſts, and to the teaching of them to live ſoberly, and righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world; and thus the free Grace of God bringeth Salvation to their Souls. And ſo dear people, thus you, who come to believe in the Light, to love and obey the Light in your own Conſciences, will come to feel and witneſs the work of the Lord God in your hearts, the working and opperation of the Word of Life, to the caſting out of the Bondwoman and her Son, which is not to inherit; to the binding of the ſtrong man, and caſting of him out; yea, the Old man with his deeds is to be put off, and you renewed in the ſpirit of your minds, and the new Man is to be put on, who after God, is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, to put him on, and to bring him forth before all men, the only begotten Son of God, who is full of Grace and Truth, Mercy and Love, Pity and Compaſſion, Purity and Holineſs, and Good-will towards all, who loveth Enemies and doth good to them that hate him, *&c.*

Eph. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23.

So coming to the Light, Chriſt Jeſus, you come to the Subſtance, to him, in whom the Figures, Types, and Shadows end in, and ſo come to witneſs him in you, who fulfils all Righteouſneſs; he who is the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs ſake, unto them that believe in him; and to be Circumciſed in him, with the Circumciſion made without hands, by the putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh by the Circumciſion of Chriſt, which the outward Circumciſion was a figure of; and to witneſs the Baptiſm of Chriſt, which is with the Holy Ghoſt and fire, which *John's* Baptiſm with water outward, was a true figure of; and he bore Teſtimony unto Chriſt, the Light of the world, who ſaid, *I muſt decreaſe, but he muſt increaſe. I indeed baptiſe you with water, but*

Col. 2. 11, 12.

but he (Christ Jesus, *who was before me*) *shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he shall throughly purge his floor; the Wheat he shall gather into his Garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.* So the outward water was but a type, the outward washing a type of the inward washing, and inward cleansing, and inward purging, and purifying by the Water of Life, or the Blood of Jesus, that cleanseth from all sin, which is felt thus to work in them who believe in the Light, and walk in the Light; and they come to know that begotten in them, that feeds upon the flesh of Christ, which is the living Bread, upon which the living Soul feeds, and is the Substance which the Bread and Wine outward did figure out; which the Manna (that God gave the *Israel* of old in the Wilderness) was a pure type of the heavenly Manna, the living Bread, which the birth that is born of God feeds upon, and lives thereby, and grows up into Eternal life.

The day of gathering is come, wherein the Lord God of everlasting bowels of Compassion is a gathering the dispersed, and seeking that which was lost, and bringing back that which was driven away, and healing that which was sick, and binding up that which was broken; but the strong and the fat he is feeding with Judgment. The Lord is a gathering people out of the Forms, Shels, and Shadows, wherein many have long stuck, and is bringing of them to the Substance and life it self, out of the many Sects, and heaps, and divers ways, into the one pure path, into the one way of Life, Light, Peace, Truth, and Righteousness, who by the one Spirit, hath, and is baptising them who believe in the Light) into the one body, wherein the unity, the oneness, and the fellowship is witnessed; blessed be his Name. Ezek. 34. 12 13, 14, 9, 16. 1 Cor. 12. 13

The way of the Lord is pure and Righteous, and unchang-

John 14. 6. Rom. 10. 8 John 12. 46. & 8. 12. able; *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, ſaith Chriſt, *the immortal Word, which* (ſaith Paul) *is nigh in the heart, to be obeyed and done*: This is he, the Light, the Salvation of God, the true Light, that lighteth every man that commeth into the *world*; who ſaith, *None can come unto the Father, but by me: I am come a Light into the world*, (ſaith Chriſt) *that whoſoever believe in me ſhall not abide in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life.* Therefore, dear people, love the Light, and believe in the Light, while ye have the Light, that ſo you may become children of the Light, and become heirs of an Inheritance incorruptible, that will never fade away: There is no obtaining the Crown but through the Croſs, and this you will come to know, who come to love the Light, and to be taught of him,

Mat 11. 29. and 6. 13. & and 10. 38. and to learn of him who is meek and low in heart, and to follow him in the ſtrait and narrow way that leads to life, which few there be that find it, and walk therein: *He that will be my Diſciple*, ſaith Chriſt, *muſt deny himſelf, and take up his dayly Croſs and follow me.* This you will come to feel and witneſs, if you be followers of the Light, a dayly denying of ſelf you will know, a denying of your *own* wills, your *own* deſires, your *own* thoughts, your *own* affections, your *own* words and works, your *own* wiſdom and righteouſneſs, and a daily taking up the Croſs, an hourly living in the Croſs; through which you muſt come to be

Phil. 6. 14 crucified to the World, its Vanity, its Pomp, Paſtime and Pleaſures, Sins and Iniquities, vain Words, Works, Faſhions Cuſtoms, Inventions and Traditions; ſo coming to be crucified with Chriſt unto the world, and to be Baptiſed into death with him unto ſin, you will come to live with him unto God in the life of Righteouſneſs; in whom (then) you will find that Reſt, Satisfaction, Joy, Comfort and Peace which no man can give unto you.

So

So, dear people, who are ſeeking, and deſiring after the Lord God, to find peace and comfort to your ſouls, this I leave with you; flee not from that which doth judg you in your own hearts for ſin and evil, and bring trouble upon you, and ſorrow upon you, and woundeth and pierceth you in ſecret, becauſe of Tranſgreſſion: I ſay, love that, flee not from it; for oh dear people! how many is there, that when they have been judged by Gods pure light in their hearts for their ſins, when trouble, and ſorrovv, and diſtreſs, hath ſeized on them, becauſe of their ſins, vvhich Gods Witneſs hath ſet in order before their eyes; then have they run unto vain helps, and run unto man for help, even to theſe that could not ſpeak a vvord in ſeaſon to them, but have daubed them up vvith untempered Morter, and have endeavored to heal their vvound deceitfully, and have preached Peace to that vvhich is for judgment, and ſo thereby they have gotten ſome kind of ſatisfaction for a time, until the Lord vvounded them again with the Sword of his Righteous Judgments, & then their ſeeming reſt fled away as ſmoak before the wind, and ſorrow & trouble took hold on them again, as pain on a Woman in travel; and then they have run again unto that which could not remove the very cauſe of their trouble and ſorrow; they have run to the Scriptures of Truth, and therein have found a promiſe, and this they have applied to themſelves, for to get peace and reſt thereby; when, alas poor hearts, they have not been in that ſtate and condition which that promiſe (which they applied to themſelves) was unto, and ſo not for them; and then they have read what the Saints once did and performed, and they ſet themſelves to do the like, and to imitate them; and ſo hereby for a time they have gotten ſome ſatisfaction, ſome kind of reſt and peace, until the Lord God did thunder again with Dread, and uttered his Voice with Terror, which cauſed the Earth

to tremble, and their habitation to fall, and then diſſolation came upon them again, and their Fig-leave garment came to be rent, and their wound greater then ever it was before; and thus they have run from Mountain to Hill, from one Phyſitian to another for healing, but they were unto them as Phyſitians of no value; for none of them could rightly heal their wounds, until at laſt, they ſaid in their hearts, *We will ſeek no more unto man, for vain is the help of man*: But we will return unto the Lord God who hath wounded us, and he will heal us; who hath broken us in peices, and he will bind us up; and ſo returning to the light of Chriſt Jeſus in their *own* hearts, (with which the Lord hath *wounded* them for their ſins, and brought trouble and ſorrow upon them for their iniquities, waiting therein in patience upon the Lord God, in the way of his Righteous Judgments, which was ſet up in their hearts) they came to feel, through their believing in the Light, and loving the Light by which they were *wounded* for ſin, the cauſe of their ſorrow, and trouble and *wounds*, taken away by the Blood of Jeſus, which is his life, which they came to feel in them, cleanſing of them from their ſins, and waſhing of them away; and ſo the very cauſe of their wound being taken away, and the corruption purged out; then he, the tender, pitiful compaſſionate God of Mercy, that in mercy towards them had wounded them, healed them with the ſweet Oyl of joy, peace, and gladneſs; and now theſe that vvere mourners do rejoyce; and they that vvere heavy hearted are made glad; and beauty is given them for aſhes, and the oyl of joy for mourning; the garment of praiſe, for the ſpirit of heavineſs; and are become Trees of Righteouſneſs, the Lords *own* planting, bringing forth fruit to his glory and praiſe, vvho hath thus ſet them free from their ſorrovv and trouble. Theſe can ſay, *Good it is to wait upon the Lord God in the way*

Iſa. 26. 8. & 33. 9.

way of his Judgments. Lo, this is the Lord whom we have waited for, this is our God, we have waited for him; come let us rejoyce in his Salvation wherewith he hath saved us; he hath redeemed us out of the horrible Pit, out of the miry clay hath he brought us, and set our feet upon a Rock, and doth establish our goings; who filleth our Souls with the fatness of his house, and causeth us to drink of the River of his Pleasure, and to suck and be satisfied with the Consolation of the Breast, and to milk out, and be delighted in the abundance of the sweetness of its vertue. Oh what! what shall we render unto the Lord, unto the Lord our God for his benefits? oh! what shall we render unto him for his Mercies? what shall we render unto him for his loving kindness? Oh! let us take the Cup of his Salvation, and drink thereof abundantly; and in the strength of the vigour of its vertue, let us, in the meekness of our hearts, and in the lowliness and contriteness of our Souls, praise, praise, the Name of the Lord our God, who is worthy of all Glory and Praise, for ever, and for evermore.

A few *words* more unto you, dear people, who desire more after the love and peace of God, then the glory and pleasures of the *world*.. Dear people, take heed unto that which discovers unto you what are your thoughts, whether they be good or evil; for that is it which must redeem your minds unto God; and wait to come to know it to be a stay to your minds, and a stop to your thoughts, and a bridle to your tongues, and to cause a watch before your mouth, and to raise a holy fear in your hearts of offending the Righteous God of Righteousness, in thought, in word, in deed.

And dear people, who have so much depended and relied upon man for teaching, retire you with your minds inward, to the manifestation of the Spirit of God in your own hearts, and wait in it to come to know the Lord God to be your Teacher; that if you should be separated from those that have been

your

your Teachers, and put into a Hole, a Dungeon, or Cave of the Earth for your Conſciences towards God, and ſo be ſeparated from all your teaching outward, you may then feel, find and witneſs the Lord to teach you, to inſtruct you, counſel and direct you, comfort and refreſh you, even by his pure Eternal Spirit in you; for all the children of the Lord, ſhall be taught of the Lord, and eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs, and great ſhall be their peace in the God of their Salvation, unto whom, unto whom be glory, glory, honour and praiſe for ever, and evermore; for he is vvorthy, he is vvorthy, vvorthy ſaith my ſoul, unto whom be glory in the higheſt. Amen.

So, dear people, for your ſakes moſtly was theſe foregoing lines written, in obedience to the tender ſpirit of love in my heart, vvhich drew me thereunto; and in tender unfeigned love, and pure good-will to your ſouls, vvho have had, and ſtill have true deſires in your hearts after the Lord, and have been, and ſtill are thirſting and hungering after the vvay of Truth and Righteouſneſs, and have been, and ſtill are ſeeking and hunting among the husks, ſhells, and ſhadows, for to find the ſubſtance, but ſtill fail of your expectation, and cannot find true and perfect ſatisfaction, but ſecretly in your hearts are panting and thirſting after the living vvater, and are vveary of feeding upon the husks, and begin to ſay (within your ſelves) to each other, Come, vve have been long vvandering abroad, hunting after the Lord afar off, ſeeking of him in this Form, and in the other Form, running from Mountain to Hill, from one Man to another, to enquire for him vvhom our Souls long for; but vve ſtill vvant the true enjoyment of him: And although man hath told us vve ſhould find him there in this Way, and in the other Way; in this Form, and in the other Form; in this Ordinance, and the other Ordinance; wherein we have been toſſed about, and

turned

turned from one broken Ciſtern to another, but ſtill we want true ſatisfaction for our ſouls, for we want the true enjoyment of the aſſurance of the Love and Peace of God: wherefore, come let us no longer hunt abroad, nor run any longer from one man to another. But oh! come let us retire our minds inward, and in ſtillneſs and quietneſs, in ſollidneſs and ſeriouſneſs let us wait upon the Lord, and he himſelf will teach us of his wayes, and lead us into the path of Righteouſneſs, where we ſhall meet him whom our ſouls hath long panted after, even as the Hart panteth after the water Brooks; wherefore let us wait upon the Lord, for the Lord is good to the man that waiteth for him, to the Soul that ſeeketh him. Therefore, come let us Iam 3.15 16. both hope, and quietly (without hunting any more abroad) wait to find and feel in our ſelves the ſalvation of the Lord, that ſo we may in truth come to find, and to ſay, He is come, he is come, and made manifeſt in us, whom our ſouls longed after; and behold his reward is with him, even joy, comfort, peace, reſt, and ſatisfaction to our ſouls. Lo, this is the Lord, we have waited for him: Lo, this is our God whom vve have vvaited for; novv let us rejoyce, and be glad in his ſalvation, and praiſe his Eternal Name. I ſay, dear people, tovvards you is the opening and yearning of my bovvels, in the caſting of this my Mite amongſt you, in the meekneſs and humility of my ſoul, and the God of Heaven (for his ovvn Seed ſake) make it a ſervice of good to you.

And then vvill the onely end of my ſoul herein be anſvver ed thereby. vvho am your friend, and one vvho deſires that you off the barren mountains may be gathered, and brought dovvn into the lovv valley, into the freſh paſtures of life, vvhere you may feed vvith Gods Babes and Lambs, and lie dovvn in the fold of reſt and peace, that you might find bread in your own houſes, and vvater in your ciſterns, the oyl in the

the Cruſe that vvill not fail, but vvill ſatisfie your ſouls in drought, and make fat your bones, that you might become like a vvatered garden, and like a ſpring of vvater, whoſe vvaters fail not.

Take this as a Salutation of the love and good-vvill of my ſoul to you, vvho am a friend to all people; one that ovvns and deſires to tender, nouriſh & ſtrengthen the leaſt appearance of God in any; A lover of honeſty and uprightneſs in vvhomſoever I find it; but a hater of hypocriſie and deceit: A Traveller in the vvomb of ſupplication for the reſtoring and gathering in of the ſcattered ſheep, and bringing home the diſpierced of the Fold, that all may knovv one ſheep-fold, and one ſhepherd.

From one of the leaſt amongſt many of the choſen Generation and peculiar people of God, (called *Quakers*) vvhoſe earthen veſſel is knovv by this Name,

WILLIAM BENNIT.

Poſtſcript.

Poſtſcript.

DEar People, you in whoſe hearts there is ſome tenderneſs and conſcienciouſneſs towards the Lord God, if you, becauſe of by-ends, and ſelf-intereſts, and through letting in (by your reaſoning and conſulting with fleſh and blood) the ſlaviſh fear of man (whoſe breath is in his Noſtrils, and can but (if by God permitted) kill the body) doth conſent, and condeſcend thereby (for to ſave your ſelves from, or out of ſufferings, either by body or eſtate) to do and joyn with that which you are really perſwaded in your hearts is quite contrary to the mind and will of God, and ſo knows it to be evil, and alſo contrary to your own Conſciences; hereby, in ſo doing, you may engage the Lord God againſt you, (in your fearing man more then God) and come to looſe your tenderneſs and conſcienciouſneſs to God-ward, and ſo hardneſs of heart may come upon you, and ſo you wholly die and wither away (as to all tenderneſs and conſcienciouſneſs towards God) even as graſs upon the houſe top. But you dear people, in whom there is tenderneſs and conſcienciouſneſs towards the Lord God, if you be faithful to the Lord in your not joyning with, nor conſenting to do the thing (for any by-ends, or private intereſts whatſoever, although it be ſet up and tollerated, and compelled to be done by a Law from man) which you are in your hearts truly and really perſwaded is evil, and contrary to the mind and will of God, and alſo contrary to your own Conſciences; but rather are willing to expoſe your ſelves to ſuffer whatever the Lord God of Almighty power, and everlaſting ſtrength, (before whoſe Eternal Almightineſs, and Everlaſting Powerfulneſs, all the ſtrength, and power of the Arm of fleſh, is even like a puff of ſmoak before a mighty wind) ſhall ſuffer man, who to day is, and to morrow is not) to inflict upon you; you hereby will

even engage the Lord God of everlasting bowels, of infinite compassion, (who is and will be a strength to the poor, feeble, weak and needy, a shadow unto them from the heat, a refuge unto them from the storm, when the blast of the terrible One come upon them like an overflowing flood) to stand for you, and to help you in your need, and in your greatest straights; when you (as Peter*) are ready to cry,* Help, Lord, I sink; *to appear to and for you in the greatest measure of his love, who right well knows what you have need of, to minister strength unto you proportionable to your tryals: And hereby dear people your tenderness and conscientiousness may dayly increase, and you come to make conscience of that which you have not made conscience of, and then you may come to find and witness that this day of tryals, sufferings and tribulations is a blessed day to you, and turneth (through the mercy and loving kindness of the Lord towards you) for your good, so that you may come to bless and praise his name for it, unto whom be praise and glory for evermore;* But a *woful day to Hypocrites, who hath gotten on a garment of profession of God and Christ,* &c. *for a cloak to cover their unrighteousness and deceit; an unwelcome day to them, a terrible day to them, for it will stain their crowns, and mar their beauty, and subdue their strength, and slay their power, and pull down their strong holds, rip off their sheeps cloathing, pull down their gay Tombs and painted Sepulchres, and their rottenness stink, and nakedness will appear. So be it, so be it,* Amen *saith my soul.*

For

For Friends of Truth in the Town of Yarmouth.

DEar Friends, whom the Lord God Almighty hath viſited in his endleſs unchangeable Love; even in his making known, and manifeſting in and unto your ſouls his pure pretious Truth, whereof he hath in meaſure made you pertakers, with his dear Children and Witneſſes of, in your meaſures, bleſſed be his Name, who hath raiſed you up to bear a Teſtimony for him and his Truth which you profeſs; who alſo hath inabled you through the power of his Love thereunto, in this the day of your tryal in that great Town. And my dear Friends, my ſoul earneſtly deſires that you all may dwell and abide, in the remembrance and living ſence of the loving-kindneſs of the Lord towards you, in his freely making known his Truth unto you, that indeed the ſence of his Love, may bind your hearts and ſouls to be faithfull unto the Lord, and his truth which you profeſs, in ſtill bearing your Teſtimony for the ſame, in this the day of tryal, ſtanding as noble faithfull witneſſes for the Truth, every one of you in your meaſures, amongſt that hard hearted and crooked Generation, in the midſt of whom my dear friends, you in the Light may ſhine as Lights, in the blamleſs Life, and unreproveable Converſation, even to the praiſe of the Lord God, and to the honour of his truth which you profeſs.

Now, dear friends, the Lord hath cauſed you hitherto, to bear a teſtimony for him, and againſt that wicked ſpirit of Perſecution, which would limit the Lord in his people; in this particuler fix in your meeting and aſſembling your ſelves together in his fear, to wait upon him, and to worſhip him

in ſpirit and in truth, though it hath been though Sufferings. And dear friends, in the meekneſs of love unfeigned ; I Cry unto you, ſaying, oh, do not grow faint, nor weary of bearing your teſtimony ſtill for the truth and worſhip of God, in your meeting together in his name ; for dear Friends, wherein can we (in one particular exerciſe of the ſpirit of truth) bear a larger teſtimony for the truth, then in our meeting and aſſembling our ſelves together in the truth, to worſhip the God of truth, in the ſpirit of truth, ſeeing that this is the thing (above many) which the wicked ſpirit of perſecution, doth ſo eagerly, and ſo highly oppoſe, and ſo eaneſtly ſeek, and ſo greatly indeavour, to deprive us of, and confine us from ; wherefore dear Friends, I cannot but in the Love and Zeal of the truth, exhort you all, not to neglect meeting together in the fear of God, ſo long as the Lord permit you Liberty ſo to do.

And oh, let not the ſmalneſs of your number (you little Flock, who are hated and rejected by the world) be any diſcouragement to you in this matter ; but oh, rather be you incouraged thereby, in the ſtrength of the Lord, in love to his truth, to bear up your teſtimony, (in that great Town, in the midſt of ſo many Perſecutors) faithfully in your meaſures, even to the honour of the Lord & his truth. My dear friends, let me ſay again, neglect not meeting together, through giving way to the ſlothful careleſs ſpirit, or through letting in the fear of man into your hearts, for indeed, my dear friends, although you be a poor ſmall Remnant, for whom my ſoul travelleth with the Lord for your preſervation, yet behold, as you keep your meetings in the fear and name of the Lord, you will feel and injoy his living preſence in and amongſt you, which will make your meetings profitable unto you.

And dear Babes, in ſtillneſs, quietneſs, in peace, patience, and contentedneſs poſſeſs your ſouls, in the dominion of truth

truth to reign over all thoſe thoughts, reaſonings and conſultings, which the Enemy of your ſouls would infuſe into your minds, whereby he would raiſe trouble and tumult in your hearts, and bring faintneſs and weakneſs upon you. And dear Friends, lend not an ear to liſten after the rumours and reports of the world, nor heed not the boaſting of the wicked, neither regard the threatning of truths Enemies; but dear Babes, continually lend an ear unto the Lord, and hearken you unto his Counſel, and have continual regard unto him in your hearts, and wait to feel his preſence with you continually, and know your unity with him; and every particular one feel and find in your ſelves, that the Lord God almighty is on your ſides; and then, my dear Friends, you need not matter who are againſt you, if the Lord be for you; ſo dear Lambs, be faithful to the Lord, and to his truth in your meaſures; and be not Diſcouraged nor Danted, (through the ſence of the rage, wroth and bitterneſs of your Enemies, and through the feeling of your own weakneſs and feebleneſs) but truſt ye in the Lord, and hope ye in his tender bowels, which are opened with groanings of compaſſion towards his poor afflicted ſuffering people, who is, and yet will be, a ſtrength to the poor and needy, a refuge unto them from the ſtorm, and a ſhadow unto them from the heat, a helper in the time of need, a Deliverer out of trouble in the greateſt ſtraits; who will appear to help his helpleſs ones, who have no other helper but the Lord.

So, the Lord God almighty be with you, and gird up your loins with Courage, Boldneſs, Strength and Valour, and ſpread upon you the mantle of faithfulneſs, and cauſe you to perſevere on in the perpetual patience, and to abide in the continual content, therein to run the race that is ſet before you, which you have begun: And the Lord almighty of heaven and of earth, for his own ſeeds ſake, keep you from faint-

ing

ing by the way, and carry you through all whatever either outwardly or inwardly you do, or may meet withal, and keep you, and preſerve you unto the end, that in the end, dear Lambs, we may lay down our heads together, in the ſweet boſom of the Lord God of everlaſting reſt, peace and quietneſs, in whoſe ſweet, meek, heavenly, humbling, melting love, my ſoul dearly ſalutes you all, and commits you all unto the Lord God almighty. Farewell, dear Friends, Dwell together in that love which thinks no evil, therein forgiving and forbearing one another, even as the tender God of bowels hath forgiven you, and born with you day after day, and time after time; and dwell all in the meek ſpirit of ſelf-denial, keeping the unity in the ſpirit, in the bond of peace.

Your tender Friend and Brother,

Norwich-Caſtle the 3d Moneth, 1664.

WILLIAM BENNIT.

God

God only Exalted in his own Work;

OR, THE

Works of God Praiſeth him in Sion.

OR,

A Song of Deliverance from a great and ſore Captivity, Thraldom and Bondage, under the King of Egyptian Darkneſs, the God of the World, where the Soul was faſt bound, as with ſtrong Chains and Fetters; but now Ranſomed (by the out-ſtretched Arm of Gods Almighty Power) and art come to Sion *with Songs of everlaſting Joy upon thy head, and haſt obtain'd joy and gladneſs, and thy ſighing and mourning is fled away: witneſſed unto, and experienced in that Veſſel, whoſe earthly Tabernacle bears the name of* William Bennit.

Publiſhed in ſingleneſs and uprightneſs of heart (from a conſtraint of Gods Love) to all thoſe who are yet groaning and panting after the Lord in truth and ſincerity, that they may meet with ſome refreſhment and encouragement in their Journey and Travels towards the Land of Reſt and Peace.

OH! oh my ſoul, my ſoul, what hath the Lord, even the Lord thy God done for thee? oh! what hath he done for thee, oh my ſoul! oh my ſoul, a little while ſit down in thy ſecret Chamber of reſt and quietneſs, and there oh my ſoul! a little meditate of the moſt excellent loving-kindneſs of the Lord, thy tender compaſſionate God of infinite bowels, which he hath manifeſted to thee, oh my ſoul! of things paſt, preſent, and to come; that ſo the perfect ſence of

of the love, mercy, pity, kindneſs, tenderneſs, and compaſſion of the Lord, thy tender God, may alwayes reſt in and upon thee, oh my ſoul! That oh my ſoul! through the ſence, feeling, and true remembrance thereof, thou mayſt be, O bleſſed God, praiſed, glorified, and magnified, reverenced, and honoured, even the holy, powerful, eternal, wonderful, everlaſting Name of the Lord God Almighty, who inhabiteth Eternity, who lives for ever and for evermore; and bound thereby to a bountiful, kind, loving, tender, pitiful, mereiful, compaſſionate God towards all ſouls; in the meaſure of God, thy God, who hath abounded in loving kindneſs towards thee, oh my ſoul!

Oh! oh my ſoul, my ſoul, remember thou wert once a priſoner in the priſon houſe of darkneſs, ſtrongly bound in chains and fetters, a ſlave and a captive in the Land of *Egypt*, under the ſervitude and ſlavery of the Prince and power of darkneſs, the god of the world, the king of *Egypt*: and under thy hard bondage, and deplorable thraldom and miſerable captivity, oh my ſoul! thou wert made in ſecret to cry and groan, under thy burdens unto the Lord thy tender God, whoſe bowels, whoſe tender bowels of infinite pity and unſathomable compaſſion did (in mercy to thee) hover over thee, even in that thy ſad miſerable deplorable ſtate; firſt made thee ſenſible of thy ſad captivity, and ſo in the ſence thereof, and in the ſence of thy own helpleſſneſs, how didſt thou cry, cry unto the Lord God of pity for help, and groan unto him for deliverance, oh my ſoul! and the Lord who opened thine eye, and gave thee a glimpſe of thy ſad eſtate, did hear thy groanings, and thy cries, and (for his own Seeds ſake) ſet himſelf, by the out-ſtretched Arm of his power, to deliver thee out of thy ſad captivity, in which thou wert, without help of thy own, and there muſt abode, had not the Lord God of everlaſting unſathomable bowels of pity had mercy upon thee, oh my ſoul!

Oh!

Oh, oh! oh my ſoul, my ſoul, the remembrance of the tender love, the tender pity, the tender mercy, of thy tender pitiful God: how can it but even rend thy bowels even from top to bottom, oh my ſoul; and remember, oh my ſoul! how the Lord God Almighty, through his ſore plagues and righteous judgments executed upon *Pharaoh* the King of *Egypt*, under whom thou wert a ſlave, by an out-ſtretched and a mighty power, by the ſlaying with the ſword of his vengeance the firſt-born of *Egypt*, brought thee out of the priſon-houſe, who broke thy chains in pieces, and ſnapt thy bonds aſunder, and brought thee out of *Egypt*, and ſet thy face toward *Canaan*, the good Land that floweth with milk and honey. And remember, oh my ſoul! how wonderfully the Lord God, who by his mighty power and out-ſtretched arm brought thee out of *Egypt*, preſerved thee and upheld thee in thy long journey unto *Canaan*, thy tedious way and paſſage through the ſea and wilderneſs, how gently did he lead thee, as a tender nurſing Father, and carried thee as in his arms, and bore with thee in his mercy towards thee, when thou ſometimes murmured againſt him, becauſe of the length and ſtraightneſs of the way that he led thee in, and becauſe of the enemies thou hadſt to encounter with by the way, inſomuch that thou ſometimes backſlided in thy heart towards *Egypt*, and luſted after the fleſh-pots thereof, and murmured againſt the Lord, who ſo led thee about in ſuch a croſs knotty way, to that part, in the which through the croſs, ſtraightneſs and length of the way, was to die, pine, and wither, and be worn away, and fall in the wilderneſs, and not enter into the holy Land, and yet the Lord thy tender God, who did correct thee through his righteous judgements; and as a tender-hearted Father did chaſtiſe thee for thy pinings, complainings, and murmurings againſt him, and thy ſecret backſliding towards *Egypt*, did not deſtroy thee, but bear with thy weakneſſes

and infirmities, and nouriſhed thee and cheriſhed thee day by day, and as a tender hearted Mother nurſeth the only tender babe of her womb; who led thee by a pillar of a cloud by day, which was a ſhadow unto thee from the heat, and a pillar of fire by night, which gave thee light by night, when the Sun was under the earth: who when thou wert an hungry, he gave thee bread from heaven day by day, freſh Manna morning by morning compaſſed about thy tent, and gave thee water out of the rock to ſatisfie thy thirſt; yea, oh my ſoul great, greatly hath the mercy, love, pity and compaſſion of the Lord thy tender God been manifeſted towards thee: how did he fight for thee, and ſubdue thy enemies before thee, and made way for thy paſſage! yea, remember, remember oh my ſoul! oh my ſoul! how that after he had brought thee out of *Egypt* by his out-ſtretched arm, and mighty wonderful power, how mightily and wonderfully did he appear for thee, to help thee in thy time of great need, and extream diſtreſs, and great trouble, even when *Pharaoh* and his great hoſt followed hard after thee, and purſued ſtrongly to overtake thee, and bring thee back again into *Egypt* under his ſlavery and ſervitude And when *Pharaoh* and his hoſt followed ſo cloſe after thee and the Sea, the great Sea, was before thee, and mountains on each ſide of thee, how great was the ſtraight thou wert in, and the trouble and ſorrow that compaſſed thee about, oh my ſoul! that thou wert even at thy wits end.

And oh! oh my ſoul, my ſoul, in this time of thy greateſt ſtraight and trouble (even when thou wert without help of thy own) thou crieſt unto the Lord thy God, who gave thee ſome glimpſe of comfort, ſaying, he would fight for thee, and thou ſhouldſt be ſtill, and hold thy peace; and ſo he by his mighty power made hard things to become eaſie unto thee, and that which appeared as a thing unpoſſible unto thee, he (by his power) made it become poſſible unto thee. Remember

ber, oh my ſoul, how he made a way for thee to paſs through the Sea, and divided the waters thereof hither and thither, and by his mighty power carried thee through the Sea, and *Pharoah* and his hoſt he utterly deſtroyed in his wrath, and delivered thee, oh my ſoul, out of his hand, and deſtroyed them who would have deſtroyed thee, and gave thee dominion over them that had dominion over thee, and thou ſaweſt them lie dead as by the Sea ſhore; glory, glory, glory, ah! glory, glory, and pure praiſes, praiſes to God, to the Lord God, even thy God, oh my ſoul! and now, oh my ſoul, thou canſt ſing a ſong of deliverance, a ſong of victory and triumph, and go into the Sanctuary of God, to the Altar of God, thy God, even God, thy exceeding joy; ah! and upon the Harp thou canſt praiſe God, the Lord thy God, thy delight and joy.

Oh! oh my ſoul, my ſoul, thou in the lowly fear and holy dread of the Lord thy tender God, and in truth and righteouſneſs livingly and experimentally canſt ſay, the Lord my God is my ſtrength and my ſong, he alſo is become my ſalvation, he is my Rock and ſtrong Tower, his work is perfect, a God, the God of truth and righteouſneſs, juſt and right he is, the holy one whoſe dwelling is on high, in the holy place, and with him alſo who is of a poor, and a meek, and a contrite ſpirit, and that trembleth before his Holineſs, and fears and dreads before his dreadful Name: ah! ah thy right hand O Lord, thy right hand, O Lord God of power, is become glorious in power, is become mighty in power, thy right hand O Lord God Almighty, hath daſhed in pieces mine enemies by the greatneſs, O Lord my God, by the greatneſs of thy wonderful excellency, thou haſt O Lord confounded them that roſe up againſt me; thou letteſt forth thy wrath and conſumed them as ſtubble before a mighty fire, thou letteſt forth the breath of thy fury, and blew upon them, and ſcattered them

as chaff before a mighty wind: Oh! oh who can ſtand before thy indignation, thy dreadful indignation? who can abide the extream fierceneſs of thy anger? thy fury is poured forth like fire, thou breakeſt the rocks in pieces, the mountains tremble before thee the mighty God; thou uttereſt thy voice, and the Heathen tremble, thou roareſt, and the Kingdoms are moved, and the earth melteth at the appearance of thy preſence, who cometh with fire, and thy Chariots like a whirle-wind; thou rendereſt thy anger with fury, and thy rebukes with flames of fire: thou haſt thy way in the whirle-winds, and the Clouds are as the duſt of thy feet. Thou art the mighty God, who can but fear before thee, and tremble at thy eternal preſence? thou roareſt out of thy *Sion*, and uttereſt thy voice from thy *Jeruſalem*, and the Inhabitants of the earth tremble thereat; but ſtill thou art the hope of thy People, and the ſtrength of thy ranſomed ones, their ſtrong Tower, their preſent Helper in the time of trouble.

Wherefore, I'll not fear though the Earth be removed and carried into the midſt of the Sea, and though the Sea roar and be terrible, and the Mountains ſhake with the ſwellings thereof, and the Hills fly before it; though the tall Cedars of *Lebanon* fall, and the ſtrong Oaks of *Baſhan* bend before it, yet I will not fear, the Lord is with me, and he will not forſake me, but he will help me, and that right early. Wherefore I will only fear before the Lord, before the Lord my God, the mighty eternal God of mighty eternal Power, who meaſureth out the Heavens as with a ſpan, and meaſureth the waters of the Seas in the hollow of his hand; who comprehendeth the duſt of the Earth in a meaſure, & weigheth the Mountains as in ſcales, and the Hills as in a ballance; who taketh up the Iſlands as a very little thing; before whoſe face the Heavens and the Earth flee away, and behold there appeareth no more Sea.

Oh!

Oh! who can but fear before thee, O Lord my God? the enemy ſaid, I'll purſue, I'll overtake, I'll not ſpare, my luſts ſhall be ſatisfied on him. But O Lord, O Lord God, my God, thou wert my God, near to help in the time of need, and in the time of greateſt need appeared, appeared in the greateſt power of love. O Lord, thou blew upon them, and the Sea covered them, and they ſunk as Lead in the bottom of the mighty Waters. O Lord, O Lord God, who is like unto thee? who amongſt the gods is like unto thee the only God, who art dreadful in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders? Oh! let the people hear and be afraid, and the Dukes of *Edom* be amazed, and let trembling take hold of the mighty men of *Moab*; oh! who can but fear before thee, O Lord my God. Thou haſt redeemed me, and led me forth in thy power, and guided me in thy ſtrength, unto thy holy habitation; thou wilt bring me in, and plant me in the mountain of thy Inheritance, in thy Sanctuary O Lord, which thy hands have eſtabliſhed, wherein I ſhall live with thee, O Lord my God for ever: Ah, glory, glory, glory unto thee O Lord God my God. The Lord is a man of war, the Lord of Hoſt is his name; *Pharaoh* and his mighty men hath he drowned in the Sea, but he hath ſaved thee, oh my ſoul! So Lord let thine enemies periſh, but let them that hope in thy mercy live for ever, to declare thy wonders, and magnifie thy name in the land of the living. Ah! glory, glory, ah glory, glory to God, the mighty God; ah! praiſes, praiſes, honour and thankſgiving unto thee, O Lord my God, who lives for ever and for evermore. *Amen.*

Oh! oh what is this, what is this that the Lord thy tender God of infinite bowels of pity hath done for thee, oh my ſoul? thou wert a ſlave in the Land of *Egypt*, and the Lord hath redeemed thee, oh my ſoul! thou wert in darkneſs, and the Lord hath given thee light; and thou wert under the region

and

and ſhadow of death, and he hath brought thee forth in the to Land of life. Thou wert in the priſon, ſhut up in the priſon-houſe, bound up with chains and fetters, in the low dungeon of darkneſs, and he hath broken thy chains, and ſnapt thy fetters aſunder, and looſed thy bonds, and broke up the priſon door, and pulled down the priſon houſe, and ſet thee free oh my ſoul!

Oh my ſoul, my ſoul! thou wert a captive in the Land of *Babylon*, eſtranged from the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, and an Alien from *Sion*, ſitting ſorrowful and ſolitary by the River of *Babylon* in the Land of Captivity, mourning when thou thoughſt upon *Sion*, for thou wert a Captive in a ſtrange Land, and ſorrow (through the ſence of thy woful Captivity and Alienation from thy native Land) compaſſed thee about, and trouble on every hand; tears was thy drink, daily ſorrow thy meat, and groans and ſighs thy greateſt joy; thou wenteſt bowed down all the day long with an heart aking, and thine eyes dropping with tears, becauſe of the oppreſſions of thine enemies, and burdens of thine oppreſſours; and at the remembrance of *Sion* (and in the ſence of thy ſeparation from her) thou didſt pant, oh my ſoul! thou didſt pant after *Sion*, the Land of thy nativity; Oh! as the Hart panteth after the water brooks, crying in the anguiſh of thy ſorrow; how long Lord, how long ſhall I be a captive in a ſtrange Land? with longing deſires in thy heart after *Sion*: thinking in thy heart, oh! when ſhall I walk with the ranſomed of the Lord upon the Mountain of *Sion*, and travel with the Lords redeemed in the ſtreets of *Jeruſalem*; and in that day, oh my ſoul! the Lord for his own Seeds ſake had regard unto thy cries, and thy tears and ſorrows was not hid from the view of his tender pitiful eye, and in tender mercy and bowels of compaſſion towards thee: he, through his free love unto thee, brought thee forth out of *Babilon*, the Land of thy captivity,

and

and ſet thy face towards *Sion* thy deſired reſt, oh, my ſoul.

But oh! oh my ſoul, how oft wert thou bewildered in thy going, even after thy face was turned towards *Sion* travelling thitherward; ſaying in thy heart, oh! I will go joyn my ſelf unto *Sion* in a perpetual Covenant which ſhall never be broken, loſing thy way, ſome times wandering as it were in the wilderneſs, in the deſerts and ſolitary places, hungry and thirſty, my ſoul even fainting with weakneſs, and then didſt thou cry unto the Lord in thy diſtreſs, and he helpt thee out of all thy troubles, he took thee by the right hand, and brought thee into the right way in which thou mighteſt come to thy deſired reſt, oh my ſoul! And now, oh my ſoul, thou art come to *Sion* with ſongs and everlaſting joy upon thy head, and thou haſt obtained joy and gladneſs, and thy ſighing and mourning is fled away.

And now, oh my ſoul! thou that wert in a deſert doth rejoyce, and as a wilderneſs are made glad, and as a ſolitary Place doth bloſom as a Roſe, as a dry heath, now as a fruitful valley, as the parched ground, now as the moiſt mould that drinketh in the rain that comes upon it. Now, oh my ſoul! thou in truth canſt ſay the wilderneſs doth rejoyce; and the deſert and ſolitary place is made glad, and bloſſom as a Roſe; water comes forth out of the wilderneſs, and ſtreams in the deſert, the parched ground is become a pool, and the dry heath ſprings of water; now the mourner rejoyces, and the heavy hearted is made glad, and beauty is giving in ſtead of aſhes, the oyl of joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs; now, oh my ſoul! is thy horn exalted in the Lord in whom thy mouth is enlarged over thy enemies: ah! the Lord maketh rich, and he maketh poor; he woundeth, and he maketh whole; he killeth, and he maketh alive; he bringeth down, and he raiſeth up; he raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and the beggar from off the dunghil,

dunghil, and ſetteth them among Princes, and cauſeth them to inherit the ſeat of Glory. Yea, the full he emptieth, that they hire themſelves out for bread, and they that were hungry and empty he filleth with good things: yea, the barren he cauſeth to bear ſeven, and ſhe that hath had many children is waxed feeble: this is the Lords doing, and it is morvellous in thy eyes, oh my ſoul!

Oh! my ſoul, my ſoul, thou canſt in truth ſay, thy winter is (in meaſure) over and gone, and the ſtormy wind is fled away, and the cold parching froſts are diſſolved, and the ſpring and ſummer is come, and the Sun with its warm beams breaks forth, and the gentle ſhowers deſcends, and the time of the ſinging of birds is come, and the turtle is heard in thy land, oh my ſoul! and the vine putteth forth her tender grapes, and the fig-tree with her pleaſant figs give a goodly ſmell. And now oh! my ſoul, thou canſt ſet under thy vine, and under thy fig-tree with thy beloved: and who ſhall make thee afraid, with whom thou canſt walk into his pleaſant garden of delights, among the beds of ſpices, and feed among the lillies, and there ſolace thy ſelf in the boſome of his love.

For, oh my ſoul, oh my ſoul! there was a time when thou oh my ſoul! hadſt loſt thy beloved, and thou ſoughtſt him by night upon thy bed, and in the broad ways, but thou foundſt him not; and therefore ſorrow compaſſed thee as a wall about, and mourning covered thee as a garment, and thou couldſt have no reſt, until thou hadſt found thy beloved, crying fiercely in thy heart, ſaying in thy ardent deſires after him, oh! oh thou art hid from me as in the clifts of the rocks, and as in the ſecret places of the ſtairs: let me ſee thy countenance, and let me hear thy voice, for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely; and when he did ſometimes ſhew himſelf unto thee behind the wall, or as through a lattice

lattice, and put his fingers in by the hole of the door, thy bowels were moved for him. But now, oh my ſoul! thou doſt enjoy his preſence, which is ſweet and pleaſant to thee, he is as a bundle of myrrhe, he is thy joy, thou ſits under his ſhadow with great delight; for he is a bower of ſpices unto thee, and his fruit is ſweet to thy taſte, he hath brought thee into his banketting houſe, where his banner over thee is love, where he comforteth thee with the flaggons of his love, he cauſeth thee to drink of his ſpiced wine, which is as the liquor of life, and the juyce of his pomegranates, which is as honey to thy taſte.

Oh my ſoul! he filleth thee with good things, that ſo thou mighteſt become as a watered garden, and as a ſpring of water, whoſe water fails not; that thy bones might flouriſh as an herb, and thy kidneys be covered with fatneſs and thy belly become as an oily Brook: thus hath the Lord thy tender God, thy merciful God, oh my ſoul! ſet thee free from the yoak of bondage. And now, oh my ſoul! rejoyce in fear and trembling, and dread and fear continually in the holy preſence of the Lord thy God, and watch, watch, watch, oh my ſoul! diligently watch in the lowly fear and godly jealouſie over thy own heart, trembling in thy bowels, leſt thou, oh my ſoul! in the joy (the great joy) in the ſence of what the Lord hath done for thee (and in a ſight of thy good ſtate thou art advanced to) ſhould be lifted up above what is meet, and thereby come to loſs and a fall; wherefore, oh my ſoul, to prevent ſuch miſhaps coming unto thee unawares, keep thee watchful and low in fear, and humble and contrite in heart, and meek and chaſte in mind, tender and broken in bowels, poor and needy in ſpirit, waiting and depending upon the meer preſerving grace of the merciful hand of thy merciful, pitiful compaſſionate God of infinite loving kindneſs; that whatever thou doſt or ſuffers (through his ſtrength)

for him, thou mayſt not be (in the leſt degree) exalted above him, but ſtill keeping low in him, dwelling beneath him, at his footſtool: and whatever thou receiveſtfrom him, when he calls for it, return it back to him; and be nothing without him but what thou art in him alone, knowing that what thou art it is by him, and what thou haſt it cometh from him.

Therefore be nothing without him, and return his own to him, for he is worthy that his own ſhould praiſe him. And in the belly of a humble, lowly, broken, contrite ſpirit dwell, oh my ſoul! where thou mayſt ſerve God with thy tears, dwelling in the ſence of the freeneſs of his love and mercy in what he hath done for thee, that the remembrance thereof may rend thy bowels before him, paſſing thy pilgrimage here in fear and trembling before the Lord thy God, unto whom, unto whom, unto whom be glory, glory, glory, praiſes, praiſes, praiſes, thankſgiving, honour, and eternal renown, be rendered unto his eternal name, who is bleſſed, bleſſed, bleſſed for ever and ever. *Amen*, *Amen*. *Halelujah* in the higheſt, *Amen*. glory, glory, ah glory; *Halelujah* in the higheſt, *Amen*, *Amen*, ſaith my ſoul.

Oh my ſoul! where didſt thou begin, but in the ſence of Gods dear, tender, precious, moſt excellent love: ſtirring in thy heart, and there muſt thou end, and reſt ſatisfied, and lay thee down quiet in peace with Gods moſt dear Babes, and tender innocent Lambs, unto whom thou cleaveſt as fleſh to their bones, towards whom thy bowels, thy bowels, thy tender bowels do unſpeakably yearn, with ſecret pantings in thy inward parts, through the weight of love that abides in and upon thee, oh my ſoul, my ſoul, my ſoul.

William Bennit.

To

To Gods Lambs in Priſon Greeting.

DEar Friends and ſuffering Lambs, ſhut up together in naſty holes; oh you dear Suffering, Tribulated, Conſcientious ones of the tender God of love, life and power; I who am your dear and tender Friend and Companion, in the pure patience and long ſuffering of the Seed incorruptible, do moſt dearly greet you, and intirely ſalute you, and ſweetly imbrace you, in the love of the Lord your God, who hath not only counted you worthy to believe in him the mighty God, but dear ones, he hath alſo counted you worthy to ſuffer for his holy name ſake, becauſe of your Faithfulneſs, and for your Obedience unto his moſt ſweet excellent everlaſting Truth; ah, dear Lambs, the witneſs hereof feel in your ſelves, yea, I believe my dear Friends that you know, and feel the holy witneſs of the holy God of holineſs in your own hearts, bearing a true teſtimony to your own ſouls; that your ſuch confinment and ſufferings is becauſe of your obedience to the Lord your compaſſionate God of infinite bowels; wherefore ye Lambs, ye dear Lambs of the Lord God of power, in him be ye comforted in the middeſt of your ſufferings for him, and be refreſhed in the middeſt of your afflictions, and conſolated in the middeſt of your tribulations, and be you made glad, and rejoyce in the middeſt of your tryals; even in the middeſt of all glorifying, praiſing and honouring your tender God, for his rich mercy towards you, to be partakers of the ſufferings of his ſeed: oh, my dear Friends, my tender bowels, is at this time opened unto you, and my ſoul ſtreams with ſtreams of love, of dear intire love towards you, which floweth forth in the true ſence and feeling, and ſimplicity that my ſoul hath of your ſufferings: of which I partake in ſpirit, and in the ſence of your

your Faithfulneſs, my ſoul is refreſhed, and bound thereby to praiſe your God, and my God on your behalf.

Dear Lambs, I believe that the ſweet comfortable preſence of the Lord God Almighty is with you, and doth ſo accompany you, as that your cup of ſufferings is made ſweet unto you, ſo as that you can drink it off with gladneſs; knowing and ſeeing; that it is the will of the Lord to permit it to be given unto you, whole will, and not your own, your innocent ſouls deſire to do.

Ah, dearly beloved Friends, what ſhall I ſay unto you, that ye might thereby be comforted, that my ſoul in the ſence there of might be made glad; well dear Babes, the fountain and fulneſs of everlaſting joy and gladneſs, is the boſom wherein you are to be wraped up, and to repoſe together for evermore, if you keep the faith to the end. The ſtreams whereof I know do often refreſh your ſouls, which overcomes you with its ſweetneſs, and lifts you up above all your ſufferings, and even make hard things become eaſie unto you. Glory, glory, and pure praiſes (in ſpirit) be ſhouted out unto the mighty God of worm *Jacob*, the everlaſting *Jehovah* of *Iſrael*; unto whom dearly and beloved Friends, I commit you all; moſt intirely and fervently deſiring that he the only Lord, who is your tender God, may for his own ſeeds ſake miniſter to all your neceſſities, and ſupply all your wants, and cauſe your ſtrength, power, wiſdom and love, with pure patience, content and long ſuffering, in him to abound daily more and more, Amen ſaith my tender ſoul. So, dear ones, read and favour my love in the Word, which is more pretious then all words whatſoever; wherein dear Lambs, repoſe together, and the milk thereof, dear Babes ſuck and be refreſhed thereby. Farewell dear Lambs, I am your dear Friend and Brother in the Lord.

WILLIAM BENIT.

To

To Friends in the Love of Truth Greeting.

MY dear and tender beloved Friends, in the love of God, and in his pure pretious everlasting Truth, whereof he hath (in the freeneſs of his pure grace and endleſs love) made us pertakers with the reſt of his dear Babes and Children; and whereof he hath made us witneſſes in our meaſures, in this his bleſſed day ſpring from on high; which is come and coming, which is brook and breaking forth in great glory: ſo that its brightneſs ſhall reach unto the utmoſt dark corners of the Earth, even to the exſtinguiſhing of the Night, and to the expelling the darkneſs which hath covered the Earth, and the groſs darkneſs which covered the People. Ah, dear hearts, the bleſſed beams of the brightneſs of this bleſſed day ſpring from on high, hath reached unto our ſouls, which were once ſealed up in the Darkneſs, under the ſhadow of the Night; and hath and doth ſhine in our hearts, giving of us the true knowledg of the true and living God, and thereby hath guided our feet (out of the crooked ſlippery paths of darkneſs wherein we once walked ſtumbling as the blind) into the paths of peace, even into the path of the juſt, which as a ſhining light ſhineth more and more until the perfect day, for which the Lord, our dear and tender God is worthy, worthy to receive pure living praiſes from the breath of his own life in our ſouls; who is worthy that his own ſhould praiſe him, for its ſacrifice is acceptable and pleaſant unto him, who is God over all bleſſed for evermore.

Dear hearts, in the true indearedneſs of the indeared love of the pure ſeed of life eternal, doth my ſoul dearly ſalute you, and imbrace you in the boſom of innocency; in the which the Lord (in meaſure hath wrapped up my ſoul with your

ſou's,

ſouls, dear Lambs, and with the reſt of his faithful Babes) as in a mantle; wherein we are together, although abſent from each other, and herein I reſt and repoſe with you, who am your reall Friend and tender Brother, in the heavenly relation which abides for ever.

William Bennit.

Dear Babes, dwell together in love, even in the pure innocent love of God which thinketh no evil, and therein bear with, and forbear, and forgive one another; even in that which keeps in the lowly fear, and preſerves in the true humility, wherein none ſhall ſtrive, except to be the moſt humbleſt and meekeſt in mind, and herein is the unity of the faith, and the bond of peace known and kept, which is exceeding comly amongſt Brethren.

The 3d moneth 1664.

To Friends of Truth.

MY dear Friends, in the pure tender bowels of the endleſs eternal fountain of love, doth my ſoul, dear Lambs, dearly and tenderly ſalute you all; moſt indearedly and fervently deſiring, that you may ſtand faſt in the pure, precious, everlaſting truth of the Lord God; in it ſo to live, walk and abide, as that you all keep your Garments clean and unſpoted of the world, as pure wiſe Virgins indeed, who follow the Lamb whither-ſoever he goes. Dear Babes, hold faſt your confidence in God, and let your hope in him be ſtedfaſt and conſtant, and in that Faith ſtedfaſtly abide; which hath been, and is, and will yet be your victory for ever, and crown of tryumph eternally, if in it you abide to the end.

Well, dear Lambs, I commend you unto the Lord God of everlaſting

everlaſting ſtrength and power, by him to be upheld and ſupported and carried through whatſoever tryals and ſufferings you do or may meet withall, either outwardly or inwardly; and by his power to be preſerved ſincere, upright and faithful to him in your meaſures, unto the end of your pilgrimage here; that ſo a noble, faithful, clear Teſtimony, you may bear for the Lord in this his day, to the praiſe of his glorious name, which is bleſſed for evermore. So the ſweet, precious, refreſhing, conſolating, inlivening, ſtrengthning, quickning, pure preſence of the Lord God of Light, of Life, Love and Wiſdom, be with you, in you, and among you all; even to the daily glading of your hearts, and refreſhing of your ſouls, and to the girding up of your loines with courage, patience, ſtrength and boldneſs; in the God of your hope, to ſtand unto the end, Amen ſaith my ſoul. So dear Babes feel my love, in the innocent life of God; and therein dwell together, and I am with you; and therein I reſt and remain, your dear Friend and tender Brother.

The 6th month 1664.

William Bennit.

To Friends of Truth in Priſon.

Dear Friends.

AH ye dear ſuffering Lambs, who are in outward bonds for the Lord, his Truth and Name-ſake, ſhut up and ſeparated from your dear Friends and neereſt Relations, becauſe of your keeping your Conſciences, void of offence towards the Lord God: dear Hearts, your cauſe is good for which you ſuffer, and the Lord God who is ingaged for you, whom you love, and do manifeſt it unto the world, through your willingneſs to ſuffer for him (rather then to do that which you know is contrary unto his will; or forbear doing of that which he willeth you to do) well he will ſtand by

you

you, and will not leave you in the time of your need; of his helping upholding power, as you abide Faithful unto him, in whose just cause you are ingaged, and he will fully plead it, with his and your Adversaries, in his own time, to your joy and their torment, except they repent. Dear Lambs, my heart is even made glad, and my soul it doth rejoyce, because of your Faithfulness to the Lord, in bearing your Testimony for his Name: Ah, the Lord God Almighty keep you faithful unto the end, that so you may not faint, nor grow weary, before your Testimony for the Lord be finished; that so you may not fall short of the Crown, which is laid up for you if ye abide to the end, even a full recompence of reward for all your sufferings and afflictions, you do or may meet with for your faithfulness unto him the living God; in whose pure bowels, of most indeared, intire, unfained love, doth my soul very dearly salute you, dear hearts; unto whom I commend you, whose pure, quickning, holy, heavenly presence, I desire may be abundantly with you daily, for the keeping of you all in pure patience and contentedness, and in a true submission to his heavenly will, that his joy, comfort and consolation, and sweet peace may abound in and unto your souls; to the bearing of you up above all tryals that you do meet withall, that you may not sink under them, and that over the temptations of your Adversaries within and without, you may Reign and be made more then Conquerers, through the Lord who hath loved you, and counted you worthy to believe in his Name and Truth, and to suffer for the same. Oh, the Lord my God, even your dear and tender God, keep you low in his holy fear, and very watchful and diligent in his pure Light, having your minds exercised therein, and girded thereby unto the Lord; that so indeed, dear Hearts, you may learn much by these your tryals and sufferings, even to your comfort and joy in God, feeling indeed that the Lord doth cause these your suffer-

ings to work together for your good, that ſo you indeed, dear Lambs, may find cauſe thereby, the more to praiſe and glorifie the name of the Lord, and to make mention of his goodneſs and mercies, and to magnifie his name in the land of the living; unto whom be glory and praiſe for ever and evermore.

Dear Lambs, receive theſe few lines, as a token of the true love of my ſoul to you in the Lord; in whom my love is right dear unto all his faithful ones.

Farewell, dear Friends, in the Lord, in whoſe innocent life, I am your Friend and Companion, in the patience and long ſuffering of the Lamb.

Norwich Caſtle the 7th month 1664. *William Bennit.*

To the ſuffering Lambs, of the Lords Flock in Priſon Greeting.

DEar ſuffering tribulated Lambs of my Maker; ah dearly beloved Friends, the tender unfeigned ſalutation of my ſoul reacheth unto you, in the unchangable Love, of the unchangable Truth, of the living unchangable God; whereof he hath made us pertakers, and of which he hath made us witneſſes, and for which he hath (through his love, his conſtraining, overcoming, powerful Love) made us willing to ſuffer, and to part with, and be ſeparated from our deareſt Friends and neareſt Relations; and to be willing to indure, and to paſs through what ever ſufferings the Lord our God ſhall permit to be inflicted upon us, rather then (for any by-ends and ſelf-intereſt) to condecend to do that thing willingly, which we know would cauſe Gods Truth to ſuffer,

his holy Name to be diſhonoured, his holy Spirit to be grieved, and our Conſciences to be defiled thereby; ah in this frame of ſpirit & free given up ſtate, the Lord God of power keep us by his power (with the reſt of his dear innocent ſuffering Lambs elſewhere) for his own name-ſake, even unto the end, until our Teſtimony for the Lord, which he in his beloved Son hath counted us worthy to bear, in this his day, be finiſhed to the praiſe glory and renown of his holy powerful name, and to the everlaſting Joy, and eternal Peace of our immortal ſouls, *Amen*, ſaith my ſoul, which doth fervently deſire, dear ſuffering Lambs, that the holy living preſence of my God, may be in, with, and amongſt you all, to your Joy and Comfort, and that his power may uphold you, and that his ſtrength may ſupport you, and keep up your heads above all your ſufferings and tryals; that ſo none may grow weary nor faint in your minds, but you may be made ſtrong in the Lord, and be able in the power of his might, to reſiſt, threſh, hammer and beat down every thought, and all carnal reaſonings and fleſhly conſultings, that your Enemy and Adverſary in your own hearts would infuſe into your minds; which indeed if entertained, how ſoon may they who are ſtrong thereby become weake, and they who witneſs freedom be brought again into bondage, and be again caught in the Serpents ſnares, who is exceeding buſie within, as well as without, ſeeking daily whom he may devour and betray of the ſimplicity of truth, and draw back again unto himſelf? Dear Lambs, you are in meaſure acquainted with his ſubtilty, yea, bleſſed be the Lord who hath open'd your eyes, and you ſee him and his temptations, and crafty allurements; and not only ſo, but you know how to eſcape them, ſo as not to be overcome by them, but reſiſt them, & overcome him and his temptations, through the ſtrength of the Lord, who hath called and redeemed you from under his power; yet not withſtanding, my dear Friends, let

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me ſay unto you, in the brotherly love, and tenderneſs of my ſoul, watch and keep cloſe unto the Lord in your own hearts, that unto him you may be kept faithful unto the very end; who will make way for your deliverance, in his own time and ſeaſon, and he will plead your righteous cauſe with his and your Adverſaries, in his ſeaſon, to your Joy, and their Sorrow.

Wherefore wholely commit your cauſe unto the Lord your God, who watcheth over you, and careth for you, and will never leave you, but will ſtand by you, and help you in the needful time; even all you whoſe truſt and hope is in him alone, and can uſe no other weapon to plead your cauſe with but the word of his mouth.

So dear Lambs, in the pure patience and long ſuffering of the Lamb (our Captain and Leader, and Example, that meek one, who ſaith, love Enemies) poſſeſs your ſouls, and reſt in ſtilneſs and peace, and quietneſs and contentedneſs in the Ark of ſafety, which the Lord hath prepared for his Family, to bear them up above the floods, until the waters abate, and dry land appear.

So the Lord be with you all, and bundle you up together in his innocent love which thinketh no evil; therein to ſerve him with your whole hearts, and one an other with all ſelf-denial; none to ſtrive, except to be moſt meekeſt and loweſt in mind, ſo that you all may be tender affectionated one towards another, forgiving and forbearing one another in love; the ſtrong bearing with the infirmities of the weak, that even as dear Children of one Father, you may dwell together in peace, and in pure unity in the ſpirit of holineſs, that a Joy and a Comfort you may be to each other in the Lord, upon whom, dear Lambs, wait together very diligently, that of his fulneſs you may all receive, who is ready bountifully to miniſter, that of himſelf unto all his tender Lambs and breathing

Babes,

Babes, who wait upon him, which he seeth is meet for them even to their daily nourishment joy comfort and refreshment.

So in the pure bowels, and tender everlasting love, of the tender God of compassion; doth my soul dearly salute you all, who loveth the Lord uprightly, and who make mention of his name in sincerity and truth, and are willing to suffer for the same, whether you be in bonds or out of bonds, my love reacheth unto all the upright in heart; Farewel dear Lambs.

From your Friend and Companion in the patience and long suffering of the Lamb, who hath, must and shall have the victory over all his Enemies, to Triumph and Reign in Dominion Eternally.

Norwich Castle 29th of the 7th Month 1664.

William Bennet.

This to go among Friends of Truth, to be read among them, when assembled together in the pure fear and dread of the most High God.

DEarly and tenderly beloved Friends, the dear & tender unfeigned salutation of my tender soul, reacheth unto you all, who loveth the Lord and his Truth with your whole hearts; and who make mention of his holy name in sincerity and truth; even in the meek, tender, lowly, holy seed of eternal life, made manifest, quickned, and in measure raised up in my soul, even in this innocent seed of immortallity doth the love of my soul extend towards you all; and I very dearly desire your prosperity and tranquility therein, even as I do desire for my own soul, and that this lowly holy seed, and meek innocent life of Jesus may daily spring grow up and flourish in every particular soul of you all; that so, though

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it was once the leſt of all Seeds in you (even as a little grain of Muſterd-Seed hid in the Earth) it may become the greateſt the higheſt and ſtrongeſt of all things in you; over-powering you and over-ſhadowing you, that ſo unto you it may become a pleaſant Bower of ſpices, and as a ſweet ſmelling ſavour; that you may even joy to ſit under its ſhadow, even with great delight, & its fruit be exceeding ſweet to your taſte.

Ah Babes, therein is Peace to be injoyed, which is Eternal, which paſſeth all Underſtanding; therein is Joy unſpeakable and full of glory to be injoyed; therein is Bleſſedneſs, which is everlaſting; Happineſs, which is endleſs, to be injoyed, out of it there is none; Ah Lambs, therein is Power to be received, whereby to overcome him who hath the power of Death (to wit the Devil) and to break his Head, and withſtand all his Temptations, and ſtrong Aſſaults, and various Alurements, and many Inticements; and power therein to withſtand, threſh, hammer and beat down all thoſe Thoughts, Reaſonings and Carnal Fleſhly Conſultations, which he (your greateſt Enemy) would infuſe into your Minds, and raiſe up in your Hearts, whereby to diſturb and break your Peace, and raiſe Trouble, and Tumults, and Inſurrections in your Minds; that ſo Faintneſs and Wearineſs might come upon you, and he (your ſubtile Enemy) might thereby gain upon you, and get advantage of you, and obtain his purpoſe and deſire, who indeed (as a roaring, raging devouring Lyon) very eagerly ſeeks (in this day of great tryal) whom he may Devour, and draw back again under his yoke of Bondage, Thraldom, and Slavery.

Wherefore, dear tender Lambs, in the Seed, the Fold, out of which he is ſhut forever, in which he hath no part, daily dwell, and continually abide; then out of the paw of the Devourer you ſhall be kept, by him that good Shepherd, who layeth down his Life for his Sheep, and leaveth them not

when the Woolf cometh to destroy them; but he preserveth his Sheep and his Lambs, and hideth them as in the hollow of his hand.

Ah how Tender, how Careful, how Pitiful, how Merciful, how Kind, how Loving, how Forbearing, how Forgiving, how Long-Suffering, how Patient, how Meek, how Humble and Compassionate, is the Nature of the tender God of infinite bowels.

Ah dear Babes, let me say unto all, wait to feel and witness the nature of *Emanuel*, even the meek Life of Jesus to rule and dwell in you daily, and you to dwell and live daily in it.

Ah his pure leaven of Life Eternal, oh how doth it work out the leaven of Death and Darkness, Malice and Enmity, and purgeth out every hard thought, and all evil surmisings, evil back-bitings and whisperings (which doth proceed from the old leaven, and are the fruits of that corrupt tree which is accursed by the Lord, and is to be hewen down, and with all its fruits cast into the fire forever to be consumed) and putteth out the Eye which would be watching for Evil, and for the halting of others, and to spie out their weakness, and to tell it abroad to their shame; oh how doth it oppose and hammer down that mind that would be great, and esteemed of by men, and would exercise Lordship over others.

Oh how doth it baptize self into the Death, and bring down the Haughty to the Dust, and boweth down the Lofty, and raiseth up and bringeth forth a Birth, which striveth not for mastery, except to be most meekest and lowest in Heart and Mind; and to abound in Pity, in Love, in Tenderness, in Bowels of Compassion, in Patience, in Gentleness, in long-Suffering, in Forbearing, and in Brotherly Kindness, yea in all the vertuous Fruits of the nature of him who is meek and low in Heart, who said, love Enemies; this Birth hath a hand ready to stretch forth unto the backward, to draw them forwards;

wards; it hath an arm ready to help to hold up the halting, and boſom open to carry the weak and faint ones in; oh it would, I know, be a help to all who ſtand in need of help, it would not that any ſhould be left behind the Camp, who are willing to preſs forwards, although they may linger behind, by reaſon of their Halting and Lameneſs; oh how hath it a garment ready to cover an others weakneſs, it never overchargeth any, it judgeth not any thing before the time appointed, it is not Haſty nor Raſh, but Patient and Gentle, and it hath a convincing reſtoring vertue with it in all it doth, ſo that it both Wounds and Heals, Kill and maks a Live, brings down and raiſeth up, lay deſolate, build and reſtore, it is tender and gentle, it breaks not the bruiſed Reed, neither doth it quench the ſmoaking Flax, it never renders Evil for Evil, but overcomes the Evil with Good; its Patience overcomes Fury, its Love quencheth Enmity, its Gentleneſs overcomes Raſhneſs, and its Meekneſs overcomes Haughtineſs; and in all it Suffers it ſeeketh no Revenge, but beareth all things Patiently; committing its Cauſe unto him who judgeth Rightly; it loveth Enemies, it beareth love & good-will unto all men, yet it hath no unity with any Uncleanneſs, nor fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of Darkneſs in any, but rather reproves them.

This is not the Birth born of Fleſh, nor of Blood, nor of the will of man, but the Birth born of God, and this Birth ſhall out-live all falſe Births and likeneſſes, and unto it muſt all bow and become ſubject, this Birth God will crown with Honour and Renown, and beautifie with Glory and Praiſe; and although it hath been troden under foot and deſpiſed by other falſe Births, yet unto it they muſt all bow, and throw down their Crowns at thy feet, oh *Zion*.

Ah the Lord, thy Husband, thy Maker, the God of Hoſt is his Name, hath determined that the days of thy Mourning ſhall paſs away, and the night of thy Sorrow ſhall for ever

vaniſh, and thou ſhalt no more be termed Deſolate, and Forſaken; oh thy Winter ſhall be over and gone, and thy Summer ſhall come, and thy Fruitfulneſs ſhall appear; Oh *Zion*, thou ſhalt appear as a Royal Diadim in the hand of the Lord, and as a Crown of Glory in the hand of thy God; who will make thee the Beauty of Nations, the Joy of Kingdoms, yea the Glory of the whole Earth, and a Praiſe therein forever, amen ſaith my ſoul. Oh haſten it, haſten it, Lord God Almighty, that ſo the Mourners in thy *Zion* may be Comforted, and the Hated be made right glad; that ſo even her waſte places may Rejoyce, and her Deſarts bloſom as a Roſe; that her Wilderneſs may become as the Garden of *Eden*, and her Deſarts as the Garden of the Lord; that ſo Joy and Gladneſs may alone be found in her, Thankſgiving and the voice of Melody; that ſo even Water may come forth of the Wilderneſs, and ſpring in the Deſart; that the parched Ground may even become a Pool, and dry Heaths ſtreams of Water.

Ah, when the Lord hath wholly gathered together in one the diſperced of *Judah*, and hath brought into one, the ſcattered of *Iſrael*, and hath throughly returned the Captivity of his People; oh then ſurely *Jacob* ſhall rejoyce, and *Iſrael* be right glad, and glory in his God, who is bleſſed forever and evermore.

And ſo, dearly beloved Friends, my ſoul hath daily a remembrance of you in and unto the Lord, unto whom I leave you, dear Lambs, very dearly deſiring that unto him you all (who hath in meaſure taſted of his Love, and of his pure pretious Truth are made partakers, and thereunto have born witneſs, in doing and ſuffering for the ſame) may by him be kept faithful unto him, even unto the very end; that ſo the Teſtimony which he hath given you to bear for his Name & Truth (in this his day of ſifting, winowing, purging, purifying, and of ſeparating the Chaff from the Wheat, and of making up his

his pretious Jewels, and of manifesting the approved in his sight) you may through the strength and mighty power of him the mighty God (who hath called you and raised you up to war against *Babylon*, and no more to touch, but to bear witness against the unclean thing) be inabled to finish your Testimony for him (although it be with your Blood) even to the Praise, Glory and Renown of his eternal powerful Name, and to your endless Joy, and everlasting Peace in him, your tender God, in whose pure, tender & unfeigned Love doth my soul kiss you, imbrace you, clasp you about, saying in spirit, Oh the Lord, the mighty God, gird up your Loins with Courage, Strength and Valour daily, and spead over you all the mantle of Faithfulness, & keep you all in the pure patience, and sweet contentedness, and in true submission to his holy heavenly will, which is your Sanctification, whose will may be done in you all; that indeed the Power, the Glory, the Kingdom, and Dominion may be his, and he alone may Reign in you, whose right of due it is, who was Dead, and is a Live, and lives forever and evermore, unto whom be glory in the highest for evermore, *Amen*.

Oh, the holy living presence of the Living God of Holiness, be in, with and among you all; in whose Love, Life and Truth, in my measure, my soul is united, and closely cleaveth to all the Children of the most high God, and they are very dear unto the soul of him, who is your Friend, Brother and Companion, in the innocent Love and Life of God, over all blessed for evermore; farewel dear Lambs.

Tir 1665. William Dennit.

Dear

Dear Friend,

IN that which is Eternal and unchangable, doth the unfeigned Salutation and tender Love of my Soul extend towards thee, who art oft in the remembrance of my Soul, which is in some measure sensible of the many Troubles, Crosses and Tryals, which thou hast been in, and now art exercised with; and truly, dear Heart, my soul desireth that the Lord may inable thee to wade through them all, in the pure Patience and true Contentedness, and that thou mayst find the strong arm of Gods mighty power in the beating down, & keeping under that part, which would complain and murmur against the Lord, and count him a hard Master, and freet its self because the Wicked Flourish, and the Ungodly spread themselves like a green Bay-Tree, and the workers of Iniquity are set up, and the Proud Lord it over the Meek of the Earth, and tread upon the Righteous as Dirt in the Streets, & Killed all the day long, and Oppressed like a Cart with Sheaves; I say needful it is to feel that part (which would freet it self because of these things) chained down by the Meek, Lowly, Lamb-like, Patient, Peaceable Spirit of the patient, pitiful, long-suffering God of Forbearance and Mercy; and to feel it cutting and beating all Prejudice and Enmity, that would be springing up from the murmuring fretting part, against those who are Instruments of Iniquity, and Servants to that Spirit, that Persecutes and Oppress the Innocent, and behold this Spirit of meekness keeps in coolness, gentleness and patience, and giveth dominion over that Spirit which in haste (yet as it thinks in a Zeal for God) crys for Fire to come down from Heaven to devour those who are Instruments of Cruelty, Iniquity, and Oppression; and indeed this Spirit of Love inableth to love Enemies, to Bless and Curse not, and seeks no Revenge, but makes willing

willing to leave all to the Lord, unto whom, dear Heart, let us commit our Cauſe, and ſure I am, he will plead it with his and our Enemies, in his own time even to their Deſtruction and Calamity, and to our Joy and Comfort in the end; in the mean while, the Lord keep us in contentedneſs, and in dominion over that Spirit that would limit God to mans time, and counteth that God is ſlack concerning his Promiſe, who indeed is not ſlack, as that Spirit counts ſlackneſs, but is a God long ſuffering, deſiring not the Death nor Deſtruction of a Sinner, but that rather he may repent and Live. Oh that all thoſe that profeſs his Name may be like-minded with him, according to our meaſures, and grow in him the Living God, who is bleſſed forevermore.

My dear tender hearted Friend, my Soul doth likewiſe deſire fervently that thee and I, and all the reſt of our heavenly Fathers Family, may be kept cloſe unto the meaſure of the free grace and love of the Lord God in our own hearts, that by it we may continually be kept in the lowly fear, and pure aw of him, who hath called us out of Darkneſs into his marvelous Light, wherein let us watch carefully over our Thoughts, Words and Works, leſt in haſte, through careleſneſs, for want of watchfulneſs, we ſhould ſpeak or do any thing that may grieve the holy Seed, and wound the Juſt one in our ſelves, and bring a burden and load upon our own Souls; wherefore dear Heart, I cannot but deſire, that I with thee, and all who love Righteouſneſs, may be kept watchful in the lowly Fear, cloſe unto the grace that keeps humble, out of the many words, in the fewneſs of words, that ſo in ſweet ſtilneſs, peace and quietneſs we may poſſeſs our ſouls, and injoy the ſweet incomes of the ſweet Love, and ſweet pure refreſhing ſtreams of the Fountain of Life according to our meaſures; that ſo even in the midſt of our Tryals and Sufferings, our hearts may be made glad in the Lord, and our ſouls may

rejoyce

rejoyce in him over all the Rage and Cruelty of the Wicked; that we may keep our ſtanding on the Rock, againſt which *Gog* and *Magog*, and the whole Hoſt of the powers of Darkneſs is not able to prevail; and herein the Lord keep us, ſaith my ſoul, for evermore.

So dear Heart, I leave thee unto the Lord, in whom my Love is dear unto thee, and my Soul ſimpathize with thee in thy Tryals and Sufferings, and deſire the Lord may bear thee up above them all, in the boſom of his Love and Patience, and miniſter daily unto thee what he knoweth is meet for thee, and keep thee in a contentedneſs with his heavenly will, that ſo thou mayſt ſay with thy whole heart, Lord, not my will, but thy will be done, and ſubmitted unto in all things, whoſe will is our Sanctification. So, dear tender Heart, in the innocent Love which drew me forth to write theſe lines unto thee, I reſt and remain thy dear Friend in the Truth.

1665. *William Bennit.*

To the Magiſtrates of Edmonds-Bury.

Friends, I hope your Nobillity and Moderation will be ſo far made manifeſt, as to read over theſe following Lines with Patience; and I deſire you may Seriouſly conſider of them, and Sollidly to weigh them in that equall Ballance, the Light of Chriſt in your Conſciences, before you Judge of them.

WE whom the World in ſcorn call Quakers, are a People that liveth in the pure fear of the Lord God, and without boaſting we can truly ſay, we are a People who are led and guided by a peaceable Principle of Love, which we have received of God, who is the Fountain of Love, by which Principle of Love we are made to live peaceable with all men, as much as in us lies, and fervenly

to desire and seek the good and welfare of all People, even from him who sits upon the earthly Throne, unto the most Inferior in the Kingdom, and by this Principle of Love in our own hearts, which is of God, we are made to bear Love and Good-will towards all people, and by it we are taught to lov Enemies, to Bless and Curse not, to Pray for them who Despitefully useth us, and to do Good to them that Beateth us and not in the least to render Evil for Evil, but endeavour to, overcome (in our selves and others) Evil with Good, and by it we are preserved from joyning with the spirit of Envy, and from being led by the spirit of Revenge, which ruleth in many, and leadeth into secret Plottings, and evil Contrivances, by way of Conspiring to raise Tumult and Insurrection, which spirit (with all its fruits) we deny and judge, and all those who are led by it to Contrive and Plot against any, or to seek the Destruction of any people, though our Enemies; such we disown, and their actions we defie, the Lord is our witness.

And by the Principle of Love in our hearts, are our Consciences made very tender to God-ward, insomuch as that we would not willingly and knowingly sin against him, and are willing rather to suffer the loss of all External things, yea even Life and all, then to break our peace with God, which we value more then ten thousand Worlds; and because we endeavour (in the strength and power of the principle of love in our hearts) to keep our Consciences void of offence towards God; and because we dare not do those things (though they be set up by men, and tollerated and compelled to be done by a Law) which we are perswaded by the unerring spirit of Truth we ought not to do, neither joyn with any therein; and because we dare not forbear doing those things (though prohibited by the Laws of men there from) which we are perswaded by the spirit of Truth is our duty (towards God) to do and perform; therefore are we a suffering People

this day, and for no other Cauſe, the Lord is our witneſs to the truth hereof.

And ever ſince the Lord our dear and tender God (who alone hath been, and now is our Helper, Strength and Refuge, and hath ſtood by us, and ſupported, and preſerved us, or elſe we had not been a People at this day) did raiſe us up to be a People, for to bear witneſs to his Way and Truth (and againſt the falſe Ways, evil Works, falſe Worſhips, Idolatry, Sin and Wickedneſs of the World) we have been a ſuffering People, and all along we have ſuffered by every Power that hath come up to Rule, and all along we have ſuffered for only our Conſciences towards God; & if our Enemies have had no Law in force againſt us, neither could find any thing on our parts, whereby they might take a juſt occaſion againſt us; then have they (as *Daniel*'s Perſecutors did againſt him, who ſought his Deſtruction without a Cauſe given them by him) even made Laws on purpoſe to Inſnare us, and Trappan us concerning our Conſcience towards God, for which we did ſuffer by the other Rulers, even many ways, *viz.* by Stocking, Stoning, cruel Whipping, Rayling, Reviling and cruel Abuſes; even Impriſonment until Death, and ſpoyling of Goods in a more abundant manner then I can relate; and all hath been for our Conſciences to God, all which we have born, and waded through in Patience, through the ſtrength of the upholding merciful Arm of our God, and by him have been kept from ſeeking Revenge upon our Enemies, but have commirted our Cauſe to God, who Judgeth Righteouſly, and Juſtifieth thoſe whom men Condemn, unto whom alone Vengence belongs, and he will repay it, who will render unto man according to his Works.

And even at this day, our Sufferings are greater then before, and now are we even as Sheep appointed for the Slaughter, and all is becauſe we endeavour to keep our Conſciences void of offence

offence towards God; and becauſe we dare not joyn with that Idolatrous Worſhip which God abhors, but muſt, as moved of the Lord, rather bear Teſtimony againſt Idolatrous Worſhips and Worſhippers, vvhatever vve ſuffer.

And becauſe vve dare not Svvare at all, knovving if vve ſhould Svvear at all, we ſhould then tranſgreſs the Commands of Chriſt, *Matthew* Chaper 5. Verſe 34, &c. *James* Chapter 5. Verſe 5, &c.

And becauſe vve follovv the practices of the Primitive Chriſtians, and dear not forſake the Aſſembling of our ſelves together, but muſt as vve are taught of the Lord meet together, in the pure fear and dread of the Name of the Almighty God, even for no other end (the Lord vvho knovveth the ſecrets of all hearts is our vvitneſs) but to Wait upon the Lord, and to Pray to the Lord, and to Build up, Strengthen and Edifie one another in the Lord, and to Serve and Worſhip God in Spirit and in Truth, vvherein God, vvho is a Spirit, is only Worſhipped aright, by his Spirituallized people, vvho are born of the Spirit, and guided and led by the Spirit of Truth into all Truth.

And it is not in Rebellion and Contepmt to King *Charles* and his Lavvs, that vve meet together to vvorſhip God, neither do vve do it in a Croſs, Stubborn, Self-vvill, as by ſome vve are charged, the Lord is our vvitneſs, but even in a Croſs to our ovvn vvills, and in Obedience to the vvill of God; vvherefore vve have peace in the Lord, for vvhoſe ſake vve ſuffer and ſtand juſtified in the ſight of God, though by Men and their Lavvs counted Tranſgreſſors.

Novv Friends, as your Moderation in meaſure hath appeared (in this day of hot Perſecution and hath been manifeſted heretofore, tovvards the Lords tender Conſcientious people in this Tovvn, vvhich I believe the Lord hath taken notice of, vvho hath regard unto thoſe vvho have reſpect to his people; and

truly it is my Souls desire, even for your own good, that your Moderation towards the people of God called Quakers, or any other people whose Consciences are tender to God-ward, may continue still and increase more and more, so as that ye might not in the least degree have a hand any more in the Sufferings of the Innocent, but might rather chuse, as meek *Moses* did, to suffer Affliction with the Suffering, Abused, Tribulated, Afflicted People of God, then to be found Prosecutors of any unjust Law against them; for indeed, happy (in that particular) is the man that hath no hand in the sufferings of the Lords people, for sure I am the Lord God hath regard unto his people, though disregarded by such as know not God nor his People; and though Hated and Persecuted by the World, yet Loved of the Lord, and very dear unto him; and though Contemptible, Ridiculous and Absurd in the eyes of the wisemen of this World, yet Beautiful, Comely, Delectable and Precious in the eyes of the Lord; and what evil any do to them because of their Consciences towards God, the Lord takes it as done unto himself; and if one day it shall be said to those who did not Feed, Cloth and Visit the Lords tender ones in Prison, *Go ye Cursed into Hell Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; then surely sad will be the Sentence of those who (through their Cruelty) go about to deprive them of Food and Raiment, and instead of visiting them in Prison, doth unjustly cast them into Prison, and hinder them that would visit them.

Oh surely, the Lord God of Pity, of Mercy, of Compassion, and endless Love, hath seen the sufferings of his People in this Nation; and hath taken Cognizance of their sore Afflictions, and Tribulations, Burdens, and grievous Oppressions, under which they have long Groaned, whose Groans are come up before the Throne of the most high, and is entred into the Ears of their Compassionate God, and he is moved with infinite

finite bowels of Love towards his ſuffering Seed, and he will plead the Cauſe of his own Elect which have long Cried unto him; whoſe Cries he the Living God hath heard, whoſe Cries he the Almighty God will anſwer, and will revenge their Cauſe upon the head of their Perſecutors, and will Oppreſs the Oppreſſors, and Devour the Devourers of his People, even as Stubble before the Fire fully dry; and they ſhall not be able to eſcape the ſtroke of his Righteous Judgement, which he hath now begun to make manifeſt in the Earth, that the Inhabitants thereof might learn Righteouſneſs; and the Beeſom of his Wrath is cleanſing the Land of Evil Doers; and many of thoſe who deſired, and indeavoured, to have Baniſhed the people of the Lord from their native Country and lawful Habitations; ſuch the Lord hath baniſhed from their Houſes, and they have fled from their Habitations, and run from his Righteous Judgements, but whether can man fly to hide himſelf from the Lord; and ſo that meaſure they meted out to others, is meted to them again, and this is juſt with the Lord, who is equal in all his Doings, and juſt in all his Ways, and he will not be mocked by any; but ſuch as People Sow, ſuch muſt they Reap; and according to their Deeds, they muſt receive a reward.

Wherefore Friends, ſo far as ye have a hand in the Sufferings of the Innocent, you have cauſe to Repent thereof, and to eaſe the Burdened, and to ſet the Impriſoned and the Oppreſſed Free; and as you tender and reſpect the good of your Souls, and deſire to be tendered and reſpected by the Lord, ſo tender the Lords tender people, and do not in any wiſe uſurp authority over their Conſciences, for that is Chriſts ſeat, and the Magiſtrates Sword is not to rule there, but only Chriſt the power of God, who maketh the Conſcience, he alone is to rule in and over the Conſcience; and Friends to the Light in your own Conſciences, come and be obedient thereunto,

unto, and it will cauſe you to do unto all men as you would be done unto, and in the Light you muſt come to believe, hearked to it, follow and obey it, before your Souls can injoy true peace with the Lord; and by it be inabled to deny all Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſt; and by it to be taught to Live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World; and to lay your Sword upon evil doers, and to be a praiſe to them that do well; and rather to tolerate, ſuch and to defend them in the exerciſe of their Conſciences towards God, in meeting together in his pure fear, to Serve and Worſhip him, then to ſuppreſs them: And to exerciſe your power in breaking up their meetings, who meet to Drink, Swear, Rant, Tear and Devour the good Creatures of God upon their filthy ungodly Luſt, even to the great diſhonour of the Lord, and to the grieving of his holy righteous Spirit; ſuppreſs ſuch, for that is the Magiſtrates work; but as for thoſe who feareth the Lord, and liveth Peaceably and Honeſtly with all men, let ſuch have free liberty to ſerve the Lord in his own Way, and worſhip him in his own Spirit, and not to be compelled to a Dead, Dark, Invented, Superſtitious Worſhip which is not of God; and then will the bleſſings of the Lord my God, be powered down upon you, and a good ſavour ye will be unto thoſe that fear the Lord, from whom ye will be worthy of double Honour.

And Friends, I underſtand that it is the deſire, if not the intent of ſome of ye Rulers in this Town, to proceed againſt me unto Baniſhment, who am an innocent man and have done you no wrong, neither have I committed any thing againſt you, or any juſt Law worthy of Bounds, much leſs of Baniſhment; neither have I, in this County, been thrice Convicted by your Law, as an offender; and I would know whether thoſe Records made by Juſtices, who are only Commiſſionated, for *Norfolk*, be good evidence in *Suffolk*, where thoſe

thoſe Juſtices themſelves have no power, ſeeing the Law ſaith, that all offences (other then Treaſon) ſhall be Inquired, Heard and Determined in the Shire, Diviſion, Limit and Liberty where ſuch offences happen, as was Inacted in the third year of King *James*, ſee Chapter the fourth. Well I am not careful in this matter, touching my own particular, only I would not have you haſty in what you intend towards me, but ſeriouſly to weigh the matter, in that equal balance, the Word of God; and take heed what you do, and hurt not your own Souls, and ſin not againſt the Lord, & then ſure I am you cannot hurt me; *Wherefore be wiſe, oh ye Rulers, and be inſtructed ye Judges of the People; touch not the Lords Anointed, neither do his Prophets any harm*; and let not Envy and Prejudice blind your Minds, nor cloud the nobility of your Underſtandings, and take heed of ingaging the Lord more and more againſt you and your Town; conſider the Lord hath hitherto ſpared you and your Town, from the Wo, Sorrow, Miſery, Diſtreſs, and Calamity which is come upon many other places; and if you deſire the Lord ſhould ſtill ſpare you and your Town, then do you ſpare thoſe who fear the Lord in your Town, and free them from their cauſeleſs Impriſonments, and do not Afflict them, leſt thereby you haſten the juſt Judgements of the Lord God upon you and your Town, which is even at hand. Well, my ſoul in the Lord is at reſt and in quietneſs, free from fearing the threatnings of men, who are not able to Baniſh me from the preſence of my God, who is with me, and with all who feareth his Name, who will work the deliverance of his people from their Sufferings, Burdens and grievous Oppreſſions in his own time and ſeaſon, and will ſo far preſerve them as that they ſhall be a People when the *Egyptians* ſhall lie dead upon the Sea-ſhore of his Righteous Judgments; the Lord hath ſpoken it, in whom is my Joy and Peace, Refreſhment and Comfort in the midſt of my Sufferings, who will never

leave

leave me, if I leave not him, for whose Cause (for which I now suffer by you) I count not my Life too dear to part with, for the Testimony of my God, in whom is my Confidence, Trust and Hope, who hath formed me for his praise, whose I am, & unto you my Conscience I have cleared, and whether ye will hear or forbear I am clear of your Blood, who am a Friend to your Souls and Bodies, and desire the welfare of both, and am one who loveth righteous Goverment and Governours, who are for the puuishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well; and such Rulers I truly honour in my heart, though not with the vain custom of the Hat, neither with the deceitful flattering titles of this World.

This is from a true lover of your Souls, who desireth your everlasting welfare and tranquility in the Lord, who is a Sufferer by you, but not for evil doing, but for doing well; the Lord is his witness that this is true, whose Servant he is, whatever he be (by you or any) accounted of.

Edmonds-Bury *common Goal* } *this 8th. Month* 1665. } **William Bennit.**

To Friends of Truth in the Town of Colchester *Greeting.*

DEarly beloved Friends and Brethren, who have tasted of the love and goodness of the Lord, and of the sweetness and pretiousness of his unchangable Truth, the virtuous workings and powerful opperations whereof you have felt in your hearts, whereby you witness and experience in measure your Souls set at liberty from the bondage of Sin and Corruption, to serve the living God in holiness of Life, to the praise of your God, who hath raised you out of the dust by his Power, and quickned you by his Life, and formed you by his own Wisdom, and given you his good Spirit to guide and

and lead you, teach and counsel you, comfort and refresh you, oh, he hath given you a taste of the Word of Life, and power of the World to come; oh, he hath living Witnesses of his Name and Truth whereof you are made partakers, and that which you have seen and known, felt and tasted of, the same you have through the strength of the Lord born Testimony unto, even by Word, by Deed, by Life and Conversation, and through great Sufferings, manifold Tribulations and Afflictions, all which the Lord your tender God hath inabled you to wade through, and hath kept you from fainting unto this day; who hath been with you in six Troubles, and in the seventh, dear Babes, he hath not left you, but in all your Afflictions for his Name-sake he hath been afflicted with you, and the Angel of his presence hath been your defence on the right hand and on the left; oh, how hath he carried you in his tender Bosome, and born you up in his Arms, and lead you gently when you were Weak, Young and Tender, and made the Crooked strait, and the Rough smooth before you, and thrown down many a high Mountain before you, and removed many a lofty Hill out of your way; who hath made a way for you in the Wilderness, and a path through many a Thickit, and hath made the hard things easie; he hath been a Shelter to you from the Heat, and a Refuge to you from the Storm, and many a time hath been unto your Souls as the shadow of a Rock in a weary Land; who hath given you Bread when you were Hungry, and Water to satisfie your Thirst; who Strengthned you when you were Weak, and Inriched you when you were Poor; who Healed you when you were Wounded, and Bound you up when you were broken to Pieces; who Comforted you in the midst of Sorrow, and hath Refreshed you when you have been heavy hearted, and lifted up your heads when they were bowed down because of the Oppression of your Enemies: Oh, how ex-

ceeding large is the love of the Lord your tender compaſſionate God of endleſs bowels of tenderneſs; oh, your own experience of his Love, his Mercy, his Pity, his Compaſſion, his Goodneſs, his Kindneſs and his Tender Fatherly Care and Dealings towards you is much larger then what I can demonſtrate with words; oh, how can you then but ſtill truſt in his Name, rely upon his Arm, and depend upon his ſaving Health, and hope in his tender Bowels, who is the ſame yeſterday to day and for evermore; who hath been with you when Trouble hath compaſſed you round, to keep you from Diſpair; and with you in the midſt of Perplexity, to keep you from being Diſtreſſed; and with you in the midſt of Perſecution, to Sucker and Cheriſh you, and refreſh your hearts as with New Wine; and oh ſurely, dear Babes, he is with you ſtill, to Comfort you ſtill, to Refreſh you ſtill, to Feed and Nouriſh you ſtill, to Strengthen you ſtill, to Uphold and Support you ſtill, to Keep and Defend you; and ſurely he will never leave you nor forſake you, if you forſake him not, but will cleave unto you, as you cleave unto him, and will ſtill be your God, and you ſhall be his People ſtill, and reſt in him for ever when in this World you ſhall be no more.

Oh, dear Friends, my ſoul loveth you, wherefore I cannot forget you, but often remember you, eſpecially ſince the Lord hath been pleaſed to viſit that place with ſuch ſore Affliction, and to give it to drink ſo deeply of the Cup of his Righteous Judgments, and oh my ſoul deſires that the Lord may keep and hide your Souls in the hollow of his hand, whatever Affliction he ſuffers to come upon your Bodies; and oh that he may inable you to wade through all, and to bear all with Patience and Contentedneſs, and think not any of you the Lord cares not for you, or that he diſ-regards you, becauſe he doth or may permit the Beeſom of his Righteous Judgements, (which he hath ſent forth to ſweep away the Wicked) to

ſweep

ſweep away many of your Bodies from off the Earth, neither murmur againſt the Lord, who may do what pleaſeth him, and yet all his doings are Equal and Righteous altogether; and how ſtrange ſoever his doings appear to the carnal reaſoning fleſhly part, yet aſſuredly he intends good in all his dealings towards all the honeſt, ſimple, innocent upright hearted ones; and it is inwardly well with ſuch whatſoever outwardly the Lord ſuffereth to befall them, and it ſhall be well with their Souls eternally, whatever the Lord permits to come upon their Bodies; and truly the ſence of theſe things I know doth cauſe Joy to ſpring inwardly in the midſt of outward Sorrows, and Comfort in the midſt of Heavineſs, Reſt in the time of Trouble, and Content and Satisfaction in the midſt of Affliction, and maketh that ſoul to bear all with patience, without murmuring againſt the Lord; and makes ſuch to ſay, The will of God be done; well it is the Lord that ſuffereth it thus to be, and why ſhould I murmur againſt him, ſeeing he knoweth what is beſt for me, and will not ſuffer any thing to befal me, but what through his Love and Mercy ſhall work for my good, as I cleave to him, and am faithful unto him; though my Earthen Veſſel may be broken to peices, and be turned to the duſt, and be taken away, as the Wicked are, who know not God; yet nevertheleſs I know it ſhall not be with my ſoul as it ſhall be with the Wicked, for it ſhall go ill with them that Die and be cut-off in their Sins, but through the love of the Lord it is, and ſhall be well with my ſoul, for that ſhall Live and never Die, whatever comes upon my Earthen Veſſel; wherefore I will not ſay in a murmuring way, Lord why is it thus, that as to outward appearance thou takeſt away the Righteous with the Wicked, and cuteſt off them that fear thy Name vvith them that fear thee not, as if thou hadſt no regard to thy people, nor reſpect to them that call upon thy Name, nor care over thoſe vvho ſerve thee vvith an upright Heart;

but I vvill be ſtill, and knovv that the Lord he is God, and may do as ſeemeth good in his Eye, vvhoſe vvorkings are Myſterious, and his doings very Strange, and his actings very Marvellous in the eyes of many; vvho is even to vvonderful for his people, unto vvhom he intends good altogether, for oh he loveth them, and they are dear unto him as the Apple of his Eye, they are his Portion vvhich he hath choſen, and his Inheritance for ever, vvhich he hath purchaſed for himſelf; vvho is God over all bleſſed for evermore.

Oh, dear Friends Brethren and Siſters, my dear unfeigned Love extends to you all in the Truth of our God, vvherein my ſoul ſalutes you vvho Love and Serve the Lord vvith a ſincere and upright Heart; and in Spirit I am vvith you, though outvvardly ſeparated from you for the Seeds ſake; and truly my ſoul ſimpathiſeth vvith you in your Tryals & Afflictions, both invvardly and outvvardly; and oh that I could help you, ſaith my ſoul; but vvell, I can cry unto him vvho is able to help you, unto vvhom, dear Babes, I muſt leave you, who knoweth how it is with ever one of you all, and is not vvanting in his Love, Mercy, Pity, Tenderneſs, Compaſſion and Care towards you who loveth him, and watcheth in his holy fear; whoſe tender bowels is more largely open towards his tender innocent hearted ones, then their weakneſs is able to comprehend. Oh the Lord Almighty be with you, and the Arm of his Power incompaſs you about, and bear you up, and keep you from Fainting and Falling as ſome have done (to the diſhonour of the Lord, and grief of your Souls) and preſerve you unto the end of your Daies, that you may finiſh your Courſe with Joy, and lay down your Heads in Peace, and reſt from all your Troubles, Sorrows, Tryals, Sufferings and Afflictions, and receive the reward laid up for the Faithful who abide to the end; this is the deſire and breathing of my ſoul to the Lord for you, who is your Friend and Companion

panion in the Faith, Patience and long Suffering of Jesus; and one that wisheth that Grace, Mercy and Peace, Joy, Comfort and everlasting Refreshment, with Strentgh, Wisdom and Might, may be augmented unto you all; and that the love of God may abound and super-abound in all your Souls, and surpass all your Sufferings, that thereby your hearts may be kept open towards God, and one to another, in a large manner, and that you continue tender affectionated one to another in the Truth, and be as meet-helps one to another, both outwardly and inwardly, to your Comfort, and to the Praise of the Lord God Almighty; into whose hands I commit you, dear Babes, and the Lord be with you, and Comfort the Mourners amongst you, and Refresh the heavy hearted ones, and lift up the bowed down, and heal the Wounded, and comfort the Languishing with love, and lift up the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees, and not suffer that which is Lame to be turned out of the way, but rather heal it, that the Halting may go upright, and the Lame may leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb may sing of the goodness and loving kindness of the Lord, and make mention of his Mercy, and declare of his Doings, and magnifie his Name in the the Land of the Living, *Amen Halelujah*. From your Friend and Brother in the Truth, who hath often had you in remembrance, and also longed to visit you with a few Lines, but desirous to wait the Lords time; read and feel my love in that which is more precious and excellent then all Words whatsoever, wherein we are hid together; Farewel dear Lambs.

Edmonds-Bury *Goal* } *William Bennit.*
the 3th Month, 1666. }

The

THE original of the foregoing Lines was chiefly write to Friends in the Town of *Colcheſter*, but having freedom in the Lord, and even preſſed thereunto by his Love; I thought meet to ſend Copies thereof to go among Friends in *Suffolk*, *Norfolk*, or elſewhere, as Friends have freedom to Communicate them one to another.

And dear Friends, let this ſignifie unto you that my ſoul loveth you, and have a remembrance of you, and a Brotherly care and affection towards you in the Truth, wherein I deſire your Proſperity, Tranquility and Preſervation, in this day of Tryal, in this hour and power of Darkneſs; even as I deſire for my own Soul, the Lord my God even your God is my Witneſs; deſiring that I and you (with all who love the Lord in Sincerity, and that make mention of his Name in Truth and Righteouſneſs) may all be kept cloſe in Heart and Mind unto the Lord, ſtanding upon our watch in the Light, with the loines of our minds girded up unto God, having on the Breſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, and the Helmet of Salvation to guide, ſtear and order us aright, that we may not be Bewildred in this day of Storms and Tempeſts, and eſpecially to have and hold faſt the Shield of Faith, by which we may be able to quench and ſend off all the Fiery Darts of the Wicked, within and without; yea to have on the whole Armour of Light, being fitted for the Fiery Tryals and Tribulations, that ſo nothing may come upon us unawares, before we be fitted for it; oh that it might not be with any of thoſe who profeſs Righteouſneſs, as it was with the People in the daies of *Noah*, who were Eating and Drinking, and Sporting themſelves, Marrying and giving in Marriage, and knew not till the Flood came and ſwept them away; but oh that we may all ſtand upon our Watch-Tower, and all hold faſt our Integrity in the

the Lord, and keep close to our first Love, and none to deale unkindly towards the Wife of his youth, by casting her off, and going after other Lovers, but all be tender over her, and still love her with your whole Hearts, and cleave unto her, for she is a Spotless Virgin, and never was Defiled with the alluring man of Pleasure, she is very Beautiful, Amiable and Comely in the Eyes of the pure in heart, and the Glory of the Lord God is her Dowry, and blessed for evermore is the soul that is joyned with her in a perpetual Covenant, never to be broken.

We all in this Prison, who suffereth upon Truth account are in a measure of Health at present, through the Love and Goodness of our God, blessed and praised be his Name for evermore; whose tender Compassion faileth not towards them who love him, therefore are his people not Consumed, but preserved as Lambs in the midst of devouring Wolves, by him the good Shepherd of *Israel*; who stopeth the Mouths of Lyons, and chaineth up the Beast of Prey for his little Flocks sake, whom he so dearly loveth, that they may behold his Power, and admire his Love, and trust in his Name, and return the Praise unto him whose Mercies are over all his Works, glory to God in the highest; my Love salutes you, all farewell dear Friends.

W. B.

Some

SOME

Prison Meditations

OF AN

Humble Heart:

Given forth from a Child in Israel, *whose soul very dearly loveth his Heavenly Fathers Children, much desiring (and travelling in Spirit for) their Prosperity in the Truth, even as for his own soul; and the Author hereof believing and knowing that this following Treatise may (if the Lord will) be of service unto many, of the tender, honest, simple, single, upright-hearted ones, who are following on to know the Lord in the footsteps of Righteousness; and who desireth to pass over on to the end, in the strait way of Holiness; therefore, even for their sakes, is this following Treatise Published from a constraint of Gods love, in singleness and simplicity of Heart.*

OH, Oh my Soul, be not unmindful of the large mercy and goodness of the Lord shewed towards thee, neither forget the exceeding loving kindness of the Holy One manifested unto thee, oh my Soul; oh let the sence of what the Lord thy dear, tender, pitiful, compassionate God hath done for thee, continually be fresh in and upon thee, oh my Soul; for the Lord thy God hath freely done that for thee, which none besides him the mighty one could do: Oh my Soul the Lord hath brought thee out of the Pit, even out of the

the horrible Pit, and out of the Mire and Clay, wherein thou once ſtuck ſo faſt, as that thou couldſt never have been able to have gotten out by all means poſſible thou couldſt have invented, but muſt have ſunk deeper and deeper therein, and ſo have periſhed for ever, had not the Lord God of infinite mercy helped thee, who did caſt his eye of pity and compaſſion upon thee, and out of his meer mercy, love and free grace, ſtretched out his hand to help thee, oh my ſoul, when none beſides him could help thee, and by his arm of his loving kindneſs lifted thee up out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay, and hath ſet thy feet upon a Rock which ſtands ſure, and can never be moved, and thereon he eſtabliſheth thy goings, praiſes, pure living righteous praiſes to the Lord thy God be rendered by thee, oh my ſoul, even forever and for evermore.

Oh my Soul, remember thou waſt once even like a poor ſilly Sheep without a Shepherd, wandering upon the barren Mountains and dry Heaths in the Wilderneſs and ſolitary places, full of Trouble, Sorrow and Perplexity, and knew not the way to the Fold of Reſt, oftentimes mourning and weeping alone, as a Dove without her Mate, when no eye ſaw thy ſorrow but the Lord alone; often ſaying in thy heart, whoſe State and Condition is ſo miſerable as mine? who ſo Poor and Deſolate as I? none knowing how it is with me but the Lord alone: And indeed the Lord then ſaw thee and knew how it was with thee, oh my ſoul, and he the tender God of unfathomable bowels of Compaſſion beheld thee in that day, when thou didſt eat thy bread Weeping, and mingled thy drink with Tears, and he the compaſſionate one heard thy ſecret crys, and knew thy ſecret deſires, and thy ſighing and groaning entred into his ears, and thy tears which thou dropped upon his Alter laid open unto the view of the eye of thy tender merciful God, and his tender bowels was mowed with

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pity towards thee, and for his own Seeds ſake he had compaſſion upon thee, oh my ſoul, and helped thee in the day of thy Trouble, and delivered thee out of Diſtreſs, who freely reached forth his Arm unto thee, and took thee by the Hand, and brought thee out of the Wilderneſs and deſolate Places, and ſet thy feet in the right way which hath led thee to a City of Habitation, and to the Fold of Reſt; and now the Lord (who both ſought thee, and found thee out, and brought thee out of the Wilderneſs, and from off the barren Mountains) he is become thy Shepherd, oh my ſoul, and how canſt thou want any good thing, he oftentimes feedeth thee, and even cauſeth thee to lie down in green Paſtures, & leadeth thee by the ſtill Waters, even *Shilo*'s brook, which runs ſoftly, and he ſpreadeth thy Table in the ſight of thy Enemies, and anointeth thy Head with the oyl of Gladneſs, and cauſeth thy Cup to overflow with new Wine, and hath brought thee to ſit under thy own Vine, and under thy Fig-tree, and none ſhall make thee afraid, oh my ſoul: Oh the Goodneſs of the Lord, oh the Kindneſs of the Lord, oh the Mercy of the Lord, oh the Pity of the Lord, oh the Compaſſion of the Lord God of tender Bowels is even Unutterable, Unſpeakable, Unfathomable and Incomprehenſible; Oh the Heighth, oh the Depth, oh the Length, oh the Breadth of the Love of the Lord: Oh my ſoul! truly when thou meditateſt of the goodneſs of the Lord, and conſidereſt of his loving kindneſs and mercy ſhewed towards thee; oh, how can but the ſence thereof pitch thee even upon a ſtand of admiration: Oh ſurely, ſurely when thou, oh my ſoul, lookeſt back into his Works, & conſidereſt how much he hath wrought in thee, and for thee, thou canſt ſee no end of his praiſes; oh praiſes, oh living praiſes, holy righteous praiſes unto the pure holy righteous Lord God be aſcribed by thee, oh my ſoul, for ever and for evermore.

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Oh my Soul as thou art kept in the freſh ſence and remembrance of the great Loving Kindneſs, the great Mercy, the great Pity and unſpeakable Compaſſion of the Lord thy tender God which he hath, and daily doth manifeſt unto thee, oh my ſoul; oh, how canſt thou but in the ſence of Gods unſpeakable Love abound in Love, in Pity, in Mercy, in Kindneſs, in Tenderneſs and Compaſſion towards all People, but eſpecially towards all Souls who are Seeking, Thirſting, Hungring, Breathing, Crying and Painting after Righteouſneſs, Peace, everlaſting Reſt and eternal Happineſs: Oh, my ſoul, the Lord thy God knoweth the frame of thy Spirit, the Lord knoweth the tenderneſs of thy Bowels, and the openneſs of thy Boſom towards all the Seekers after Righteouſneſs, towards all the Travellers to *Sion*, and towards all the Mourners therein: Oh, my ſoul, remember how that at ſometimes when the great Fountain, the great Deep hath opened, and iſſued forth of his fulneſs into thee, oh my ſoul; and when Joy hath come into thy heart as a River, and Gladneſs as a mighty Stream, Refreſhings as ſhowers in the Spring, and Conſolation as due upon the tender Plants, and when thou couldſt ſing for joy of heart, and ſhout aloud even Praiſes and Halelujahs to thy God, that then, even then thou, oh my ſoul, remembreſt the Poor and Needy in his own Eyes, and think'ſt thou heareſt his cry ſounding in thy Ear, and his ſoul ſaying in ſecret; Oh how many is there who Eateth of the largeſt Loaves, and Drinketh of the largeſt full Flagons; but oh, alas for me, I have ſcarce a drop of Refreſhment, hardly a crum of Conſolation, but my Tears is my Meat and Drink Day and Night, whileſt my Enemy ſaith unto me, where is thy God? Oh I go bowed down all the day long, and none knoweth my Sorrow but the Lord alone; Oh, I am even as an Owl in the Deſart, and as the Pelican in the Wilderneſs, I am as the alone Quail in the ſtubble Fields, and as the Dove mourning for the

loſs of her Mate, and as the alone Sparrow upon the Houſe top, and as a Woman forſaken and grieved in Spirit; Oh, whoſe Condition is like mine! is there any amongſt the Sons and Daughters of Men like unto me? is there any ſo Poor as I? oh, is there any ſo Needy as I? oh, is there any ſo Weak and Feeble as I? is there any ſo Fooliſh as I? oh, is there any ſo Dry and Barren as I? oh, is there any ſo Cold and Fruitleſs to God-ward as I? is there any ſo Deſolate as I? Oh my leanneſs, oh my leanneſs, oh how long, how long ſhall it be thus with me? oh how long, how long ſhall I ſit mourning as by the River of *Babylon* with my Harp laid aſide? oh when, when ſhall I walk again in *Sion*, and travel in the Streets of *Jeruſalem?* with a new Song in my Mouth, and everlaſting Joy upon my Head, and living Praiſes in my Heart unto the Lord who dwelleth in his *Sion*, and his preſence is great in his *Jeruſalem*; but oh alaſs for me, I am as one caſt out of his ſight, and one who walketh dejected all the day long; Oh when will the Lord cauſe the days of my Mourning to be over, and the nights of my Sorrow to paſs away, and my Sighings and Groanings to vaniſh, and all Tears to be wiped from mine Eyes? oh when will the Lord give me Beauty inſtead of Aſhes, the Oyl of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs, that I (a Poor Dry Barren one) might become a Tree of Righteouſneſs, bringing forth Fruit of Holineſs abundantly to the praiſe of the Lord God, that he in and through me might be glorified? Oh when ſhall my Winter be over, and the terrible Storms be gone? oh when ſhall the cold nipping Froſts be expelled, & the Darkneſs and Gloomineſs be extinguiſhed? oh when will the Sun of Righteouſneſs break forth unto me in his Glory, and his warm Beams refreſh and warm my poor cold Soul? oh when will the Spring come, when ſhall I know a Spring-time in the Lord? oh when will Summer come? oh when will the

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singing of Birds come? oh when shall I hear the voice of the Turtle in my Land? oh when will the Showers from on high fall down upon my Soul? oh when shall I receive the early and latter Rain? oh when shall I come to sit under my own Vine, and under my Fig-tree, and none to make me afraid? Oh how long shall my Beloved be hid from me, as in the clifts of the Rocks, and as in the secret places of the Stairs? sometimes indeed he shews himself unto me, as behind the Wall, and as through a Lattis, and then my Bowels, my tender Bowels are moved for him: Oh when, oh when shall I have a full enjoyment of him whom my soul loveth? oh that I could but plainly hear his Voice, and perfectly see his Face; for oh indeed sweet is his Voice, and his Countenance is very comly; my soul desireth him in the Night season, and in the Morning I seek him early; but oh I cannot find him whom my soul loveth, for he hath with-drawn himself from me, and that is the cause of my Leanness, Coldness, Barrenness and Unfruitfulness to God-ward, which is the cause of my Sorrow, Tears, Sighing, Groaning, Mourning and walking Dejected all the day long.

Oh, indeed there was a time once when my Beloved knocked at the Door of my Heart, saying again and again, open, open, unto me; my Head is wet with Dew, and my Locks filled with the Drops of the Night; open, open unto me, and let me in; but oh wo's me, I was gotten into a Bed of false Ease and wrong Security, and was loath to come out; but I made many excuses, and said, I have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my Feet how shall I defile them, &c? and I lingered so long, as that my Beloved withdrew himself; and at last I rose (in my own time, not when he called) to open to my Beloved, and he was gone, and then I called him, but he did not answer me, I sought him, but did not find him; and oh, my Bowels, my Bowels is even pained

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for him, and my Soul panteth after him, even as the Hart painteth after the water Brooks; Oh that I could but find him whom my ſoul loveth, oh I would hold him, I would hold him faſt, I would not let him go; he ſhould lie all night in my Boſom, I would be watchful and diligent that I grieve him not, and very fearful of diſpleaſing of him, and would take heed of giving him any cauſe whereby to leave me, and thus to hide his Face from me; but oh, alaſs for me, when ſhall I find him, when will he come I long for? Oh when, when ſhall I have my full enjoyment of him? oh, when will he bring me into his Banquetting-Houſe, and his Love be even as a Banner over me, his left hand under my Head, and his right Imbraſing of me, ſtaying me with Flagons, comforting me with Apples, making me Sick of Love, giving me of his ſpiced Wine, and of the juce of his Pomgranets? oh, if thus I could come to enjoy him whom my Soul Loveth, then would all Tears be wiped away from mine Eyes, and I forget my Sorrow, becauſe of Joy and Gladneſs, and then ſhould I look no more Sorrowful, but ſhould Rejoyce, as *Hannah* did, and ſay; Oh my Heart rejoyceth in the Lord, and my Horn is exalted in the Lord, and my Mouth is enlarged over my Enemy (who ſaid unto me, I ſhall be always Barren and Unfruitful) becauſe I rejoyce in his Salvation, who hath regarded my low Eſtate; oh, now I the Barren ſhall bear Seven, and ſhe who hath had many Children wax Feeble, now I the parched Ground become a Pool, and I the dry Heath Springs of Water, now I the ſolitary place Rejoyce, and I the Deſart bloſſom as a Roſe, I the Poor one made Rich, and I the Weak one made Strong, I the Fooliſh one made Wiſe, I the Empty one overflow with Fulneſs; now the days of my ſore Mourning turned into Joy, and the nights of my Sorrow turned into Pleaſure, and the ſeaſons of my ſeeking him whom my ſoul loveth turned into times of ſweet repoſes with him in his bed of ſolace: But

oh,

oh, alaſs for me, I may ſpeak of theſe things, but oh, when, when will it be thus with me? oh how long ſhall I wait, how long ſhall I ſeek, how long ſhall I call and utter my voice weeping, ſaying, oh come away, come away unto me, thou whom I mourn for, whom I long after, whom my ſoul loveth; oh I have waited ſo long that I am weary, and begin to be almoſt without hope of his coming any more unto me: Well what ſhall I do, and whether ſhall I go? I will even lay me down in Sorrow, and make it my Bed, and make Grief my Sheets, and Tears my Pillow, and Sighing and Mourning my Sleep, untill he come vvhom my ſoul loveth; for verily I cannot, I cannot be ſatisfied vvith another beſides him.

Oh, vvho amongſt the Sons and Daughters of Men ſhall I make my moan unto? unto vvhom ſhall I complain and eaſe my heart unto? vvhere ſhall I find one vvho is ſenſible of my condition, that can ſimpathize vvith me, and that can ſpeak a vvord in ſeaſon unto my poor ſoul, oh, is it thus vvith any as it is vvith me? Yes, yes, I believe there is many hath been, and many now are in thy condition: Oh, where may I find one of them, that I might eaſe my heart unto him, and ſpread my condition before him? for, oh verily my Bowels is very open to thoſe who be in my condition; well, have patience, be quiet, and be ſtill, and lend an ear unto me, and I may ſpeak a little how it is with me, and it may be (if the Lord will) to thy comfort; for, oh truly my ſoul loveth thee, oh my heart is moved with compaſſion towards thee, oh my bowels, my bowels is open unto thee, and my ſoul greatly ſimpathizeth with thy ſoul, and could even wiſh my ſoul (for a time) in thy ſouls ſtead; oh, though indeed I am but a Child, yet truly I am in ſome meaſure ſenſible of thy condition, and can read it by my own; and oh how willingly would I help thee, according to my ability; oh, truly methinks I would even be a help unto all who ſtand in need of help, but eſpecially unto thee

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thou poor ſoul; What art thou Poor? ſo am I; what art thou Weak and Feeble? ſo am I oftentimes; what art thou Empty? ſo am I oftentimes; what art thou Cold and Barren? ſo am I ſometimes; what art thou as one Deſolate and Deſtitute? ſo am I ſometimes; what dooſt thou eat thy Bread Weeping, and mingle thy Drink with thy Tears? it is ſo with me at ſometimes, when I want the enjoyment of him whom my ſoul loveth, for truly it is with me ſometimes as it is with thee; for ſometimes I have not the enjoyment of my Beloved, as I have at other times, but ſometimes he ſeems to be withd-rawn and to hide his Face from me; oh then it is with me as it is with thee; oh then Sorrows take hold upon me, and Trouble ſurroundeth me about as a Wall, and Mourning covers me as a Garment, and none ſeeth my Tears but the Lord; oh then my Leanneſs, my Leanneſs, my Coldneſs and Barrenneſs is my greateſt Burden, which cauſeth me to go bowed down in Spirit, ſaying in my heart, Oh, whether is my Beloved gone, and what is the cauſe he hath with-drawn himſelf from me? wherefore is it thus with me, what is the matter, what ſhall I do, what will the Lord leave me, what will my God forſake me, what will the Lord now caſt me off who hath done ſo much for me? oh what is the cauſe that it is thus with me? wherefore is the Windows of Heaven ſhut up, and the Shovvers of Refreſhment from on high with-held from me? oh once I could ſay the Lord is my Shepherd, and my ſoul doth not want; he cauſeth me to feed, and even to lie down in green Paſtures, and leadeth me by the ſtill Waters, and ſpreadeth my Table with Dainties, and anointeth my Head with the Oyl of Gladneſs, and cauſeth my Cup to overflow with new Wine: But oh, alaſs for me now, I am in a Dry and Thirſty Land where no Water is; Oh, what hath the Lord caſt me off for ever? oh my Tears is my Meat and Drink, whilſt my Enemy ſaith unto me, where is thy God, doſt thou think he

he will ever appear again unto thee? why doſt thou ſtarve Hunger, Thirſt, Cry and Paint after him? alas, it is in vain for thee to wait for him; once indeed thou hadſt the enjoyment of him, once thou wentſt with a Multitude, with them to the Houſe of God, with the voice of Joy and Praiſe, with a Multitude that keep holy day; but, alas, thou muſt not look for ſuch a day again: And thus the Adverſary of my ſoul endeavoureth to add Sorrow to my Sorrow, and to encreaſe the weight of my Burden, that ſo I might ſink and never riſe; But, oh the Lord my God is near to help me, even in that time when I can ſcarce perceive him, and when I am (as *Peter* was) ready to ſink, then his invisible arm of Mercy is ready to ſave me; and a ſecret hope the Lord preſerveth alive in me, which is as an Anchor unto my ſoul, which keeps me from ſuffering Shipwrack, a hope that the Lord will appear again to me to my Joy, whereby ſome encouragement I feel ſtirring in me to wait upon the Lord patiently, and to truſt in him, though I do not ſee him; and to relie upon him and hope in his tender bowels, when he ſeems to be far off me, and to roul my ſelf upon him, and ſurely he will appear again to thy Joy, oh my ſoul, who canſt not be ſatisfied without his preſence, even the preſence of the Lord thy God, which thou deſireſt more then all things elſe whatſoever; wherefore the Lord ſeeing it is ſo with thee, that thou deſireſt his preſence more then all other things; ſurely, ſurely he will not caſt thee off for ever, ſurely he will appear again to thy joy, wherefore, why art thou ſo much caſt down, oh my ſoul, and why art thou thus diſquieted within thee? oh hope, hope thou in thy God, for thou ſhalt yet praiſe him, the Lord will yet again command his loving kindneſs in the day time, and in the night ſeaſon, his ſong ſhall be with thee, even praiſes to the God of thy Life; oh wait patiently upon the Lord, and truſt in the living God, whoſe compaſſions fails not toward his

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thoſe vvho love him; oh, he vvill ſend out his Light and Truth into thee again, and it ſhall bring thee unto his holy Hill, and to his Tabernacle, and then ſhalt thou go to the Altar of God, of God thy exceeding joy, and upon thy Harp ſhalt thou praiſe the Lord thy God, thy Delight and Joy; oh, it is good for thee both to hope and quietly to vvait upon the Lord, for the Lord is good to the Man that vvaits upon him, unto the Soul vvhich ſeeketh him, and cannot be ſatisfied vvithout him; oh, vvait patiently upon him even as a Servant vvaiteth upon his Maſter, and as a Maiden at the hand of her Miſtreſs, ſo do thou vvait for the Lord, and even as the Husbandman vvho ſovveth his Seed in the Earth, hath long patience for it until he receiveth the early and latter Rain; ſo do thou vvait patiently upon the Lord, vvho vvill be unto thee as the early and latter Rain in due ſeaſon; wait upon him, he who is to come, will come, and will not tarry, and his reward will be with him, even fulneſs of Joy, Comfort, Peace, Reſt and ſweet Satisfaction unto thee; for ſurely, ſurely, the Lord will never leave thee nor forſake thee, if thou forſake him not; indeed he may ſeem to hide his Face from thee for a time, but without doubt he will appear again to thy Comfort, who cannot live without him? oh my ſoul, the Lord heareth thee often ſaying in ſecret, alaſs, What is the Glory of the World unto me? what is the Honour and Praiſe of the World unto me? what is the Favours, Friendſhip and Eſtimation of the World to me? what is the Vanities, vain Sports, Delights & Pleaſures of the Sons and Daughters of Men to me? oh, ſurely all theſe things are but as Droſs and Dung unto me, in compariſon of the Lord my God, who is the Fountain of everlaſting Joy, Delight and Pleaſure; oh, if I enjoy him fully I have enough; he is the joy of my Heart, the rejoycing and glading of my Spirit, the ſtrength of my Reins, the girdle of my Loines; wherefore, how can I live without him? oh my ſoul, the

Lord

Lord intends good unto thee by all his dealings with thee, if he withdraw for a time, and hide his Face from thee for a ſeaſon, it is thereby to let thee ſee what thou art without him, how Poor, how Weak, how Feeble, how Fooliſh, how Empty, how Dead, how Dry, how Cold, how Barren and Unfruitful art thou without the Lord? that ſo thou being made truly ſenſible of thy own Weakneſs and Inability, may be the more ſenſible of the needfulneſs of the ſupporting Power, and upholding Arm, and ſaving Grace of the Lord thy God, and the more to relie and depend upon the Lord; oh my ſoul, though the Lord withdraw his preſence from thee, thou comeſt the more to know what the want of his preſence is, and comeſt to learn to prize the ſweet enjoyment of his preſence the more, and to hold him faſt and cleave unto him, and to be very vigilent and careful thou doſt not grieve him, nor do the thing that may cauſe him to withdraw himſelf from thee, oh my ſoul. Oh my ſoul, thou muſt learn to know how to Want, and how to Abound; how to be Full, and how to be Empty; how to be Rich, and how to be Poor; and in every Condition to be content, and not to murmur againſt the Lord; the Lord can open and none can ſhut, and he can ſhut and none can open; the Lord can open the windows of Heaven and ſhower down abundantly upon thee, oh my ſoul, and even make a Plenty in thy Land, even cauſe thy Store to abound with Corn, and thy Fats overflow with new Wine; and he can alſo ſhut up the windows of Heaven for a time, & make a Famine in thy Land, if he pleaſeth, and thou muſt not ſay unto him (in a murmuring way) why dealeſt thou thus with me? for indeed he may do vvhat he vvill do, and yet all his doings are Juſt & Righteous altogether, and in all his dealings vvith thee, he thy dear, tender nurſing Father, intends good unto thee, oh my ſoul. Oh my ſoul, vvhen the Fountain openeth, and the great Deep overflovveth, and fills thee vvith

plenty of all things needful for thee, even then, oh my ſoul, dread and fear thou before the Lord; and take heed of being lifted up in Heart, of being puffed up in Mind, of being exalted in Spirit, and bevvare of a falſe Eaſe, and vvrong Liberty and falſe Security, vvhich may ſoon ſteal upon thee at ſuch a time, if thou do not abide upon the Watch, and dread the Lord, and drink the draughts of Joy in the pure fear and trembling, never departing there from, in vvhat ever thou enjoy of the Lord, or receive from the Lord, or do and ſuffer for the Lord, keep lovv in Heart, meek in Mind, humble in Soul, tender in Bovvels, contrite in Spirit, and then, oh my ſoul, thou art in a ſafe condition; truly, my ſoul, vvhen thou appeareſt Wiſe, Strong, Rich and Full enough, even then thou art rather in greater danger then vvhen thou appeareſt Weak, Poor and Empty in thy ovvn eyes, although thou art not then vvithout danger, but haſt cauſe to fear and vvatch in all conditions; oh my ſoul, vvhen thou appeareſt Weak, Poor and Feeble in thy ovvn eyes, even then take heed of diſtruſt and doubting, but hold faſt thy Truſt in the Lord, and let thy Confidence in his Name be firm, and Hope in his tender Bowels be ſure, and conſtantly relie and depend upon him, and honour him in believing in him, and if he kill thee, yet truſt thou in him, and never leave him; for, alas whether ſhouldſt thou go, he hath the word of eternal Life, who is worthy to be Glorified, Magnified, Honoured and Praiſed, Feared, Served, Loved, and Obeyed forever, and for evermore.

Oh my ſoul, thou dearly loveſt thy Fathers Children; oh, the Lord knoweth how near and dear his dear Babes and tender Lambs are unto thee, oh my ſoul; oh, thou knoweſt them in the Spirit of Love, wherein thou delighteſt to Imbrace them (even thoſe whom, outwardly, thou never ſaw) and (in ſpirit) to claſp them about, and kiſs them with a Kiſs of Peace, and hug them in the Boſom of Indearedneſs; ah, thy

Bowels,

Bowels, thy Bowels is open unto them, and thy Love is dear indeed towards them, as the Lord thy God knoweth; and oh that love might abound in thee more and more, and in the hearts of all the Children of Light, it may abound one towards another, as in Days past, and Years which are gone, that it may appear to all we are of God who is Love, and that we all are true Disciples of Christ in that we love one another, not only in Shew and in Word, but in Deed and in Truth, loving one another fervently with a pure heart.

Oh my soul, thou desirest to sympathize with thy Fathers Children, in their Tryals, Sufferings and Afflictions; and (in spirit) to bear a part with them therein; oh, thou desirest even to Mourn with them that Mourn, and to Weep with them that Weep in secret; and to Rejoyce with them that Rejoyce, and to Travel in Spirit with and for the Travellers to *Sion*, and with the Travellers in *Sion*, and to watch with those Watch-men, which the Lord hath set upon the walls of *Jerusalem*, who for *Sions* sake cannot be still, and for *Jerusalems* sake cannot hold their peace; who cease not to cry day and night to the Lord, and can give him no rest until he establish *Jerusalem*, and make her a praise in the whole Earth for evermore.

Oh my soul, be watchful and wary that thou dost not in the least degree seek Glory, Honour and Praise to thy self, and to be had in esteem by others; but, oh wait to feel self wholly Baptized into Death, and made of no Reputation; and take heed that thy left hand know not what thy right hand doth, and do nothing to be seen of men, or whereby to be accounted of by others; but in all thou dost, appeal unto him who seeth in secret, and he it is who will reward thee openly; seek thou to be only known, and manifested, to the pure unerring Witness in all Consciences, and to stand justified and approved by it, and that is enough; no Honour, no Glory,

no

no Praiſe but to God alone; oh, ſtrive not for Lordſhip and Maſterſhip over others, but rather ſtrive to be moſt Meekeſt, Loweſt, Humbleſt, Tender and Contite in Mind and Spirit, condeſcending even to the Loweſt, and ſerving the Meaneſt in love; ſeeking Peace and Unity amongſt Brethren, with all ſelf-denyal, bearing, forbearing and forgiving for the Seeds ſake; bearing with the infirmities of the Weak and Feeble, watching for the good in all, without reſpect of Perſons; but not to watch for evil in any, for that is abominable in the eyes of the Lord; and ſeek thou the glory of God alone, the honour of his Name, exaltation and ſpreading forth of his Truth, the freedom, growth and reign of the Seed of God in the hearts of all, the proſperity of his tender Lambs, Babes and Children, that they may all ſtand in this day of Tryal, and be preſerved in this hour of Darkneſs and Temptation, and even to ſeek the good of all, yea the good of thy greateſt Enemies, and have nothing but love and good will towards thy greateſt Perſecutors, ſeeking the Salvation of all people, but not the Deſtruction of any.

And, oh my ſoul, be circumſpect, and vigilent, to walk ſo as becometh the Goſpel, and thee to be an adorning to the Truth of God, and to be as an holy example and righteous pattern unto all people, where-ever I come, that I may be unto the Lord as a ſweet ſmell and delectable ſavour, that the bleſſing of the Lord my God may be poured down upon me yet more and more, that I might become fruitful unto the Lord my God, and be an inſtrument in his hand amongſt the Sons and Daughters of men, to the praiſe, glory, honour and renown of the Lord Almighty, for evermore; oh my ſoul, watch and fear before the Lord, and take heed thou doſt not that thing to pleaſe others which thou knoweſt is not approved by the Lord; keep thy eye unto the Lord, & look not out at others, to walk by Imitation, and if thou ſeeſt him or her, one or another,

another (whatever they be accounted of) do thoſe things which the Lord allows thee not to do, do not thee do them becauſe another doth them, but watch and keep cloſe unto the Lord, and take counſel of him.

Oh my ſoul, do not judge, or juſtifie thoſe things which thou haſt not a true diſcerning in, becauſe an other judges or juſtifies them, but rather be paſſive in that matter, and ſtand ſtill and wait upon the Lord for a perfect underſtanding in all things.

Oh my ſoul, ſeek not Liberty to the Fleſh, beware of that counted Freedom, which is indeed Bondage, which hath ſtollen upon many in their latter days; oh my ſoul, indeavour to put off thoſe things, which in their place are ſaid to be Lawful, which are a means to hinder thy growth into the Eternal: And oh, walk wiſely before all men, giving no offence to the *Jew* nor *Gentile*, nor to the *Church in God*, knowing that there is that which is Lawful, but not Expedient; there is that which is Lawful, but it Edifies not; wherefore forbare what may be forborn, and yet be not brought under the power of any thing below the life, but ſeek after thoſe things which make for Edification, Love, Peace and Unity; for God is the author of Peace, and not the author of Confuſion, Striſe, Contention and Debate: Oh my ſoul, thou doſt greatly deſire that I might not appear, in the ſight of any of the Lords Lambs and little ones, to be more then what I really am in and through the grace of God, by which I am what I am, and his grace which he hath freely beſtowed upon me hath not been in vain, praiſes to his Name forever; oh, I would not be accounted of by any little one to be more then what I am in the Lord, but rather let me be hid, leſt honour ſhould be aſcribed unto that, unto which it doth not belong; for indeed all honour belongs to God alone; alas all Fleſh is as Graſs, and what is Man, he is but a Veſſel wherein God may appear or diſappear as he pleaſeth,

pleaſeth, and indeed the Lord is jealous of his Glory, and he will not give it unto another; wherefore my ſoul ſeek the glory, honour and praiſe to God alone, unto whom only it is due for ever and evermore. Oh my ſoul, thou doeſt not want the love, the dear unfeigned love of the Lords dear Babes, tender Lambs and Children, and oh thou deſireſt thou mayſt not want their prayers for thee, oh my ſoul, that I may be preſerved in this day of trial, and be enabled by the Lord to finiſh my Teſtimony for him, to his praiſe and my comfort, joy and peace for evermore.

Oh my ſoul, fear thou before the living God, and very diligently take heed leſt thou who ſtand'ſt ſhould fall, as ſeveral hath done, to their own woe, and to the diſhonour of God, and to the cauſing his unchangable Truth to be evil ſpoken of, and many ſeekers after Righteouſneſs to ſtumble, & the hands of *Sions* Enemies thereby ſtrengthened againſt the Faithful of the Lord, whoſe hearts are made ſad, whom the Lord hath not made ſad; even in the ſence of the ſad condition of thoſe who once in ſome meaſure were acquainted with the Lord, once taſted of his Goodneſs and Graciouſneſs, of his ſweet unſpeakable Love and Peace, and even in ſome meaſure, taſted and handled of the word of Life, and of the powers of the World to come; who were delivered out of ſpiritual *Egypt* by an out-ſtretched Arm and mighty Power, and by the ſame Power carried through the ſpiritual Sea and Wilderneſs, and did in meaſure eat of the ſpiritual Meat, and drink of the ſpiritual Rock, which was made unto them as a pillar of Fire by night, and a pillar of a Cloud by day, &c. and yet behold they are drawn back again by the Enemy of their Soul, through their yielding unto his Temptations, and receiving his Proffers, and are turned as the Dog to his Vomit, and as the Sow that was waſhed to her wallowing again in the mire; and hath even made Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conſcience,

Conſcience, and are proved treacherous Children, denying their Father who begat them, and caſting off their Mother who travelled in pain to bring them forth, and hating the Womb that bore them, and the Paps which gave them ſuck, and this hath come upon them through Careleſneſs and Sloathfulneſs, and through Reaſoning and Conſulting with the Enemy of their Souls, and through looking at the Trouble, Tryal, Sufferings, Streights and Difficulties which appeared in their way, and through luſting after the Fleſh-pots of *Egypt*, through looking back into the Eaſe, Pleaſure, Riches and Honour of this World, which hath carried them away captive again into *Egypt*, into the houſe of Bondage again; wherefore, oh my ſoul, watch, watch and ſtand faſt in that Liberty which the true Chriſt the Power of God hath brought thee into, and take heed thou be not intangled again in the yoak of Bondage.

Oh my ſoul, if there be ſome who once were in ſome meaſure Freſh, Green, Tender, Living and Fruitful unto God, who now have loſt their Freſhneſs, Greenneſs, Tenderneſs and Fruitfulneſs towards God, and now Coldneſs, Deadneſs and Barrenneſs is come upon them to God-ward, and their Love and Zeal for the Lord waxed cold; oh my ſoul, if it hath thus happened unto ſome, oh, how canſt thou but fear before the Lord, leaſt the ſame ſhould happen unto thee alſo.

And if ſome there be whoſe minds are gotten into a full Liberty, and are at eaſe in the Fleſh, living above the Croſs of Chriſt Jeſus, which Crucifies to the World, and grown Careleſs and Negligent, ſpending their time often with vain Talking, fooliſh Jeſting, and needleſs Communication; how ought all to ſpend their time in waiting upon the Lord, in meditating and exerciſing themſelves in the things of God, being very watchful over their Thoughts, Words, Works and Actions, having the pure fear of the Righteous God freſh in their

 hearts,

hearts, ſtanding in awe of him always, leaſt they ſhould Sin againſt him in Thought, Word & Deed, lying down & riſing up in his pure fear, Eating & Drinking and doing all things in the pure fear of the Lord, knowing a ſtay to their Minds, a ſtop to their Thoughts, a bridle to their Tongues, a watch before their Mouth, and a fearing in their Hearts, leaſt they ſhould not be watchful enough over their Lives and Converſations, yea even over their very Carriage and Geſture, their words being very few, ſober and ſavoury, even ſavouring of the grace of God in their hearts, they deſiring and endeavouring to walk ſo as that they might in Life, Carriage and Converſation be as holy Patterns and righteous Examples of Love, of Peace, of Holineſs and Purity, of Meekneſs and Lowlineſs, of Tenderneſs and Pity, of Mercy and Compaſſion, of Patience and long Suffering, of Sobriety and Gentleneſs &c. that ſo they might walk as becometh Saints, Blameleſs and Harmleſs, as Sons of God, without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Generation, amongſt whom to ſhine as Lights to the adorning of the Truth of God profeſſed by them, and to the Glory, Honour and Praiſe of the Lord God, and to the Joy, Comfort, Refreſhment, Peace and Conſolation of their own Souls: Oh this condition is very ſweet, bleſſed and happy; wherefore cleave, cleave, and keep cloſe unto the Lord thy tender compaſſionate God, and then aſſuredly the Lord will cleave unto thee, and will not leave thee, oh my ſoul; wherefore lift up thy head in the ſtrength of the Lord, and look up unto the holy one, whoſe dwelling is on high in the holy place; and with thee, oh my ſoul, as thou art kept humble in Heart, contrite in Spirit, meek in Mind and trembleth at his Word; and look not at thy own Weakneſs, Feebleneſs and Inability, but keep thy eye unto the Lord and truſt in his Name, relie and depend upon his Arm, and hope in his tender Bowels, who maketh the Poor Rich, the Weak Strong,

Strong, the Simple Wise; wait thou patiently upon him, and look not out at the greatness of others measures, neither look thou at the smalness of thy own, least Faintness, Weariness and Discouragement should thereby come in upon thee, and thou murmur because thy measure is no greater, but be thou contented, and truly satisfied with thy portion, and be faithful unto the Lord in thy measure, and being faithful in the little, thou shalt be made ruler over much, and enter into the joy of the Lord; wait upon him, who hath freely given in thee what thou hast of him, and he can give thee more; there was nothing in thee (that was of thee) which induced the Lord to communicate that measure of his fulness unto thee, which he hath dispensed to thee, but of his own meer mercy, tender love and free grace, who of his own free will hath begotten thee again unto a living hope, so that thou well knowest, that it is not his that willeth, nor he that runneth, but God who sheweth mercy: Oh thou hadst not awakened out of the sleep of Sin and Corruption, had not the mighty God thundred from his dwelling place upon thee, and awakened thee; oh my soul, surely thou hadst never been raised out of the dust of Sin, and grave of Iniquity, had not the Lord of his own free will raised thee up, and brought thee forth by his own Almighty power: Oh my soul, surely thou hadst never (as of thy self) turned unto the Lord, had not the Lord of his own free will turned thee, and after thou wast turned thou Repentedst, and after thou wast Afflicted thou smotest upon thy Thigh, yea thou wast confounded, because thou boretst the shame of thy youth; and surely, my soul, after the Lord had turned thee in measure to him, thou hadst not followed him in the narrow and strait Way, through the Cross in the Self-denial, had not the Lord thy God drawn thee after him by the cords and woings of his tender Love; and surely thou hadst turned back again from the Lord into the Mire and Durt again, and hadst never

Stood untill this Hour, but muſt have Fainted and Dyed ere this Day, had not the Lord of his own free will Kept thee, Preſerved thee, Upheld thee, and Supported thee by his own almighty Power, whoſe Grace hath been ſufficient for thee, both in the day of Proſperity, and in the day of Adverſity, in the time of Tryal, in the hour of Temptation; and ſo let all Fleſh be ſilent in thee, oh my ſoul, and the Lord only Exalted, and the Boaſter for ever Excluded, and God alone have the Glory, and ſelf wholly ſlain, and the Lord alone Honoured and Praiſed, and his unſpeakable Love and free Grace, Admired, and his holy Name Feared and Obeyed, by whoſe Grace thou art what thou art, and his Grace beſtowed upon thee hath not been in vain; bleſſed, bleſſed be the Lord, and pure holy praiſes to him, and glory and halleujah to him in the higheſt, Amen ſaith my ſoul. Oh, Lord, what was I and what was my Fathers houſe? I was neither a Prophet nor a Prophets Son; what was I, that the King of Glory ſhould caſt his eye upon me, even when I lay as among the Pits? what was I that he ſhould hold forth the Scepter unto me, and I ſhould find favour in his ſight? who regarded my low Eſtate, and raiſed me out of the Duſt, and brought me from off the Dunghill to ſit among Princes.

Oh my Soul, the Lord hath done much for thee ſince the day he formed thee in the Womb, and brought thee forth for his Praiſe; he hath made the crooked things ſtrait before thee, and rough ſmooth, and Mountains he hath laid low before thee, and removed many a Hill out of thy way, and he hath made a way for thee in the Wilderneſs, and a path through many a Thicket, he hath lopt the Bough with terrour, and the great one of ſtature hath been hewn down; he did cut up the Thicket of the Forreſt with Iron, and *Lebanon* did fall by a mighty one; oh, he hath made the hard things eaſie unto thee; oh, how hath his Love made thee willing to

bow

bow thy neck to the Yoak, and to take up the Croſs, and totally to deſpiſe the Shame, and to follow the Lamb through ſome Tryals and Tribulations, whoſe love hath drawn thee after him, whoſe love hath (as it were) made thee to forget thy fathers Houſe? Oh, how hath his love cauſed me to caſt off other lovers, and to love the Lord my God, who is now become my Treaſure, and my heart is with him? ſo that if I be ſhut up in Priſon, if I enjoy him; oh, then Days, Months and Years may paſs over my head, and Time is not thought long, nor Sufferings hard, becauſe of the enjoyment of the preſence of the Lord my Treaſure, whom my ſoul loveth, for whoſe ſake I am willing to ſuffer; whoſe pure ſweet refreſhing, comfortable Preſence makes a Priſon delightſome to me; praiſes, pure living praiſes to my God for ever, who hath been with me in ſix Troubles, and in the ſeventh he hath not left me: he is my Buckler, my Shield, my Strength, my Rock, my Safe-Guard, my ſtrong Tower; wherefore I'le not fear the threats of the Wicked, neither regard the cruelty of the ungodly, nor heed the purpoſes of my Enemy, nor mind the determinations of unrighteous Men; through the ſtrength of my God I will not fear, though the Earth be removed and carried into the midſt of the Sea; and though the Mountains ſhake, through the ſwelling thereof; though the Heathen rage, and the People imagine vain things, and the Rulers take counſel againſt me, Ile not fear what man can do unto me, for the Lord is with me, and I ſhall not be moved, and the Lord will help me, and that right early; yet alas for me, poor, poor worm, I am but a Child weak and feeble, but indeed having had great experience of the love of my God, and of his tender Fatherly care over me, how can I but confidently truſt, hope, rely and depend upon my God, believing that he, the mighty one, will enable me, the weak one, to wade through and endure thoſe tryals he pleaſes to exerciſe me withal; who

through

through his love and mercy hath cauſed my Tryals to work for my good, praiſes to his name for evermore, who hath nine times delivered me out of the hands of unreaſonable men, out of their Priſons and Holes, where I have ſuffered for the Teſtimony of my God, through his enabling of me, without murmuring againſt him; praiſes unto him alone, no honour, no glory, but unto God, ſaith my ſoul, who hath kept me by his power from bowing to the Beaſt, or drinking of the Whores Cup; pure praiſe to my dear God for evermore, who will free me once again from Bonds in his own time. I am willing to wait thy ſeaſon, oh my God, who art with me; and oh let me never depart from thee, O Lord, and then I know thou wilt never leave me, but thou wilt be my God, to help me ſtill, and to ſupport me ſtill, and to comfort me ſtill, and refreſh me ſtill, and quicken me ſtill, and to feed me ſtill with Bread from Heaven, freſh Manna Morning by Morning, and give me to drink of the River of thy Pleaſure Daily; who wilt enable me to ſtand faithful to thee unto the end of my days, that I may finiſh my Teſtimony for thee, thy Name and Truth in this thy day, even with Joy, and lay down my Head in Peace, in thy tender Boſom of endleſs Love, oh my tender God, and therein repoſe, with thy dear Children for evermore, and have my full ſatisfaction of love in thee, thou Fountain of Love, and therein fetch my full breath for evermore; oh let it be ſo, oh let it be ſo, oh my dear God, for thy own Seed ſake, to thy own praiſe thou holy one, who is worthy, worthy of all glory, glory, honogr and everlaſting thanſgiving, and pure living praiſes for ever, and evermore, Amen, Hallelujah, glory and eternal renown to the almighty one in the higheſt, Amen.

Oh my ſoul thou dearly loveth the whole Flock of God where-ever they are ſcattered upon the face of the Earth; oh, thou greatly deſireth their Proſperity and Tranquility, and

that

that the Lord may prosper and bless them withal spiritual Blessings in Christ Jesus: Oh, the Lord God keep all his Children every where in this hour & power of Darkness, and preserve his dear Babes and tender Lambs in this day of great Tryal and manifold Temptation; Oh the Lord keep all those who make mention of his Name in Sincerity and Truth, from bowing in the least degree unto the Beast, and from drinking the least drop of the Whores Cup, although she should be permitted to drink their Blood; Oh, the Lord God Almighty keep his Sheep and Lambs, who were once scattered abroad, in the cloudy dark day, whom he hath sought and found out, and gathered out of the desart Places, and waste howling Wilderness, whom he hath brought from off the barren Mountains and dry Heaths, into the low, low, low fresh green Valley, where the pure sweet refreshing consolating springs of Life Eternal encompasseth them about; Oh, the Lord keep them still and quiet, minding their Feeding, and not at all heed the raging of the Sea, nor regard the unmerciful Waves thereof, which often looks very high, as if they would quite overflow the Valley of the low Places, and drown all who flee not unto the Mountains for Refuge and Safety; but oh let not the sheep and Lambs, and little ones fear, nor at all flee to the Hills for Refuge, for behold the Lord the high and mighty one, the holy one of *Israel* is their Shepherd, and he even continually watcheth over them, and greatly careth for them, and he it is who hath giving bounds to the raging Sea, and he limits the proud Waves thereof, and shutteth up her Floods as he pleaseth; he can let forth the Wind, and suffer a Storm, and he can make a Calm when he pleaseth, he can cause the Sea and the Wind to obey him; and therefore the Children of God need not to fear none besides their Lord, who will suffer nothing to befal them, but what shall work for good to all his chosen faithful ones; wherefore it is good for all the

Children

Children of the Lord confidently to truſt in the Lord, and not at all fear, though their Enemies purſue hard after them, and ſay in their hearts, *Come, come, we will purſue them, we will overtake them, our Luſts ſhall be ſatisfied upon them, we will have the deſire of our Hearts concerning them, we will draw our Swords, and our Hands ſhall deſtroy them, and we will try whether their Gods (in whom they ſay they truſt) be able to deliver them from the ſtroke of our Hands*; Well, let not *Iſrael* heed the boaſting and threatning of his Enemies, nor regard the purpoſes of his Adverſaries, though they purſue hard after him, and ſay, *We will bring them back again into* Egypt, *or elſe we will totally Deſtroy them*; Yet let not *Iſrael* fear, for the Lord his God is between him and his Enemies, and fights for him againſt his Adverſaries, and he in his Anger will look down upon them, and trouble their Hoſt, and take off their Chariot wheels, and will blow in his Wrath upon them, and the Sea of his righteous Indignation ſhall cover them, and they ſhall ſink as Lead in the bottom of his righteous Judgments, and he will get himſelf a Name through the deſtruction of *Sions* Enemies, and Honour and Magnifie himſelf through the deliverance of his Choſen, who will work wonders for his Redeemed, inſomuch as the Dukes of *Edom* ſhall be amazed, and even trembling ſhall take hold upon the mighty men of *Moab*, and all Nations ſhall ſhiver and quake before the mighty God of *Iſrael*, who is dreadful in Holineſs, fearful in Praiſes, doing Wonders: Oh, let *Iſrael* honour his God in believing in him, and in truſting in his Name, in relying and depending upon his Arm of everlaſting ſtrength, and patiently without murmurings to wait upon the Lord, for he that is to come will come, and will not tarry, whoſe work is before him, and his reward is with him, even Joy for the Mourners in *Sion*, and Beauty for Aſhes, Gladneſs for the heavy hearted in *Jeruſalem*, Freedom for Bondage, Freedom from Weights, Burdens and grievous Oppreſſions.

Oh

Oh let all the Children of the Lord wait without fainting, upon the Lord, for yet a little while and the voice will be heard, ſaying rejoyce, and even ſing for joy ye Saints, Servants and Prophets of the moſt High, and triumph in the Lord Almighty over the Beaſt and falſe Prophet, and over the Whore which hath corrupted the Earth, who hath long ſat as a Queen, and ſaid in her heart ſhe ſhould never ſee Sorrow, with whom the Nations of the Earth hath committed Fornication, and ſhe hath made Nations, Kindreds, Tongues and People drunk with the wine of her Fornication, who hath long deceived the Nations with her golden Cup, which hath been filled with Abominations, and in her is found all the Blood of the Martyrs, and Servants of Jeſus, which hath been ſhed upon the Earth, and ſhe hath rid upon the Beaſt that roſe out of the Sea, who received his ſeat, great power and authority from the Dragon, who perſecuted the true woman that was clothed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve Stars upon her head; who ſought to devour her Manchild, and made war againſt the remnant of her Seed who keep the Commands of God, and have the Teſtimony of Jeſus; theſe cannot worſhip the Beaſt nor his name, nor receive his mark, but theſe worſhip God alone, and are followers of the Lamb through many tribulations, whoſe garments are made white in his Blood, by whom they are redeemed from amongſt men; theſe the Beaſt and falſe Prophet have ſought to Kill, Perſecute and root out from off the face of the Earth; but wo, wo, wo, to the Beaſt, falſe Prophet, and the Whore, for the day of their Judgment is come, & Miſery, Calamity, Diſtreſs & Deſtruction is coming upon them; & ſhe, the mother of Harlots, the mother of Witchcrafts, the Abominations of the Earth ſhall utterly be Deſtroyed, and totally Burnt with Fire; for ſtrong is the Lord God Almighty who Judgeth her; and now ſing O Heavens, and rejoyce ye who

 live

live therein, over myſtery *Babylon* the great, for it is fallen, it is fallen as a mighty Milſtone into the bottom of the Sea, never more to ariſe again, *Amen, Halleluiah.*

And the Lord will thunder from Heaven upon thy Enemies, oh *Sion*, and will break thy Adverſaries to peices, and will give ſtrength to thy King, and exhalt the horn of his Anointed, and he ſhall Reign, and Rule, and Proſper, and execute Juſtice and true Judgment in the Earth; in his days *Judah* ſhall be ſaved, and *Iſrael* ſhall dwell ſafely, and ſit under his own Vine, and none ſhall make him afraid; then ſhall it be ſaid to *Jeruſalem* fear not, and to *Sion* let not thy hands be ſlack, the Lord in the mideſt of thee is mighty, he hath ſaved thee, he hath ſet thee free from thy Trouble, he will rejoyce over thee with Joy, he'll joy over thee with Singing, then it ſhall be ſaid, ſing oh Daughter of *Sion*, and ſhout oh *Iſrael*, and rejoyce withal thy heart, oh Daughter of *Jeruſalem*, for the Lord hath taken away thy Judgment, he hath caſt out thy Enemies, and thy Warfare is acompliſhed, and thy great Travel is finiſhed, and now thou ſhalt reſt from thy Labour, and they who have Laboured and Mourned with thee, and for thee, ſhall rejoyce for Joy with thee, and ſuck and be ſatisfied with the ſweet conſolation of thy Breaſt, and milk out, and be delighted in the abundance of thy Glory; oh the Lord thy Husband, thy maker (the God of hoſts is his Name) will extend Peace, Joy, Comfort, & everlaſting Refreſhment as a mighty Stream, and endleſs Conſolations as a River; oh then ſhall they be Comforted in thee after their Sorrow, and be born up upon thy Sides, and dandled upon thy Knees; for as a Woman comforteth her only Son, ſo will the Lord comfort *Jeruſalem*; in the ſence whereof her Children ſhall rejoyce, and their Souls be right glad, and flouriſh as an herb, and their Spirits ſhall praiſe and ſing glory unto him who is Lord and King of Heaven and Earth, who is worthy

worthy, worthy of all Glory, Praiſe and Honour for ever, and for evermore, *Amen* ſaith my ſoul.

The thing which the Lord hath purpoſed muſt be accomplished in his ſeaſon, and the thing that he hath determined muſt be fulfilled in deſpite of all the powers of Darkneſs; Oh, that all thy Babes and Lambs may willingly wait thy appointed time, O Lord God Almighty; oh dear God, keep all thy people retire in thy Name, that ſo what ever thou ſuffers to befal their Bodies, their Souls may be ſafe bundled up in the bundle of Life, wrapped therein for evermore, for a terrible day is like to be upon all Fleſh, and who can be able to abide it? Oh, dear God, increaſe the Patience of thy People, ſtrengthen the Faith of thy Choſen; oh, ſupport the Weak, and uphold the little Ones, which cannot go alone; oh, that none of thy Flock may faint, nor grow weary; oh, that all thine might ſtand in the day of Tryal, and be kept in the hour of Temptation, and born up under all Sufferings, that ſo in the end they may come forth as Gold ſeven times refined in the Fire, that they may ſhine as Stars in the Firmament of thy Power, making mention of thy Goodneſs, Graciouſneſs and Kindneſs, O Lord God Almighty, declaring of thy mighty Acts, and ſing of thy Mercies and wonderful doings, and Glorifie, Magnifie, Honour and Praiſe thee, thou mighty everlaſting and powerful one, who art from all Eternity to all Eternity, whoſe Throne is eſtabliſhed of old, whoſe Scepter beareth ſway in Righteouſneſs, whoſe Kingdom is Everlaſting, glory and hallelujah to thee in the higheſt, for ever and for evermore, yea praiſes, praiſes, pure living praiſes every minute, be rendered unto the Lord Almighty, ſaith the ſoul of

W. B.

OH ariſe, ariſe, thou holy righteous Seed of the Covenant of Life Eternal; Ariſe, ariſe, thy Light is come, and the Glory of thy God is riſen upon thee; Oh thou lovely one, Nations ſhall come to thy Light, and Kings to the brightneſs of thy Riſing; Ah thou beautiful one, thy Sons ſhall come from far, and thy Daughters from the ends of the Earth; Ariſe, ariſe thou beautiful one, who art altogether lovely: Oh how ſweet is thy Love, thou lovely one? oh how excellent is thy Love, thou choice one? oh thy love, thy love is more precious then Rubies, more ſweeter then Hony, oh thy love is better then Wine; Oh how hath thy love overcome the hearts of many, and won them unto thee? oh thy love draws many after thee; oh how doth thy love cauſe many to caſt off all their other Lovers to follow thee, thou lovely one? oh thou art become unto many Souls (who loveth thee, thou lovely one) even the chiefeſt of ten thouſands, whoſe eyes are opened to ſee thy Beauty, and to behold thy Comelineſs, thou beautiful one; oh thou art hid from the Polluted, neither can the Unclean behold thy excellent Beauty, the *Vulture*'s eye cannot perceive thy Comelineſs, nor they who hath eyes full of Adultery, and cannot ceaſe from Sin, and have hearts exerciſed with coveteous practiſes, and are gone a whoring after many Lovers; oh from theſe thou art hid, thou lovely one, even as a Garden incloſed, as a Spring ſhut up, as a Fountain ſealed from them: Oh ariſe thou choice one, and let thy Beauty appear unto thoſe who have not ſeen thy Beauty; and let them taſte of thy Love, that ſo they may caſt off all other Lovers, and follow thee; caſt off all, and cleave unto thee with their whole hearts. Oh ariſe, ariſe thou beloved one, and ſhine forth in thy excellent Glory, that even the Nations may be raviſhed with thy Beauty, and

Kingdoms

Kingdoms overcome with thy Love, and be drawn after thee, that a bleſſing in thee they may obtain; Oh, ariſe and let thy Fruitfulneſs appear, thou precious one, and let Joy and Gladneſs fill thy heart, thou lovely one, for the days of thy rejoycing is come and coming, and the days of thy mourning, oh *Sion*, is fleeing away; Oh thou beloved one, thou haſt been even as a Woman forſaken and grieved in Spirit, and few or none of the Sons or Daughters of Men hath looked upon thee with an eye of pity; oh thou haſt been as the Owle in the Deſart, and as the alone Sparrow upon the houſe top, and as the alone Quail in the ſtubble fields, and as a Dove mourning alone without her Mate, who haſt ſet ſolitary alone as in the Wilderneſs, and none among the Sons of Men to comfort thee; & oh thou beloved anointed one, thou haſt been like unto a man of Sorrow, and very deeply acquainted with Grief; often Smitten, often Grieved, often Afflicted, often Wounded, often Pierced and Oppreſſed, even as a Cart that is preſſed with Sheaves, and yet the Sons and Daughters of Men hath not eſteemed thee; although indeed, thou patient one, thou haſt been wounded by their Tranſgreſſions, and grieved, ſmitten and pierced, and bruiſed by their Iniquities, and hath born the weight of their Sins, and the burden of their Tranſgreſſions, even while they like Sheep have gone aſtray, every one following his own way, & Feaſting themſelves as for a day of Slaughter, whilſt thou haſt been Mourning becauſe of the Iniquity of the People; Eating and Drinking and riſing up to Play, whilſt thou haſt been Weeping and Groaning in ſecret, becauſe of the multitude of their Tranſgreſſions, who hath heaped Sin upon Sin, and Iniquity upon Iniquity, and hath loaded thee therewith, which hath been as an impreſs of ten thouſands upon thee, thou tender one, and unto thee they had no regard, they took no notice of thy Sorrow and Burdens: But oh thou beloved one, thy God, thy tender

God

God, who hath loved thee with an everlasting Love, took notice of thy Sorrow, and he saw thy Grief, and beheld thy sore Weights and Burdens, and took cognizance of thy grievous Oppressions, and he heard the voice of thy Weeping, and thy Tears which thou droppedst upon his Alter lay in the view of the eye of his pitiful Soul, and he beheld thy great Travel, and thy Sighing and Groaning entered into his Ears, and his tender, tender Bowels of infinite Love, Mercy, Pity and everlasting Compassion, was and is moved towards thee, and he hath determined to comfort thee, with an everlasting Comfort, thou patient suffering one, and the Nights of thy Sorrow, shall vanish away for ever, and the Days of thy Mourning, shall be over.

Oh thou beloved one, lift up thy Head, lift up thy Head, in the strength of thy God, and gird up thy Loines with Courage in the power of his Might, for thy Winter is almost over and gone, and shall no more come, the Storms are vanishing away and shall no more appear, the nipping Frosts are dissolving by the Sun of Righteousness, who is arisen upon thee with healing in his wings; Ah, lift up thy voice like the sound of a Trumpet, and shout like the voice of a King, and sing for joy, thou beloved one; for thy Spring is come, thou lovely one; thy Summer is come, thou lovely one; the singing of Birds is come, thou beautiful one; and the voice of the Turtle is heard in thy Land, thou delicate and choice one; let thy heart be filled with Melody, thou blessed one, who art cloathed with Chastity, and keepeth thy Virginity in the Chamber of Purity; oh, thy beloved is come, and into his Banqueting-House he is bringing thee, where his Banner over thee is Love, where he will stay thee with Flaggons, and comfort thee with Apples, and cause thee to drink of his spiced Wine, and of the juice of his Pomgranets; oh *Sion*, rejoyce thou in his Love, for the days of the glading of thy heart

heart is come, thou tender one, who haſt been toſſed with tempeſt & not comforted; thou haſt been termed Deſolate and Forſaken; thou haſt been as one Barren and Unfruitful: but now ariſe, ariſe, lengthen thy Cords, and ſtrengthen thy Stakes, and enlarge the Curtains of thy Habitation; for lo thou fruitful one, thou ſhalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy Seed ſhall inherit the Gentiles, and thy Off-ſpring the People; the North ſhall give up, and the South ſhall not keep back; they ſhall come from the Eaſt, and from the Weſt,& flock unto thee as Doves to the Window; thy Sons ſhall come from far, and thy Daughters be nurſed at thy ſides, thou ſhalt cauſe many waſt places to be Builded, and many Buildings to fall, and deſolate plaees to be Inhabited, and Inhabited places to be laid deſolate, and barren Mountains to become fruitful Valleys, and fruitful Places to become barren Mountains, and the Wilderneſs become a Vinyard of ſweet Grapes,the Forreſt as a City of Habitation,the parched Ground to become a Pool,and dry Heaths ſprings of Water; oh ariſe, ariſe, thou beloved one, and let thy Fruitfulneſs be manifeſted to the Nations, break forth in thy excellent Glory, ſhine forth in thy glorious Beauty as clear as the Morning without Clouds, fair as the Moon, and bright as the Sun, that thou mayſt appear as a royal Diadem in the hand of the Lord, and as a Crown of Glory in the hand of thy God, that far off Nations may ſee thy Beauty, and remote Kings may ſee thy excellent Glory, and be won by thy Love unto thee, that they who hath Hated thee may Love thee, becauſe of thy Love that did extend to them, even whilſt they hated and rejected the woings of thy Love; oh, my ſoul loves thee in thy Love, thou lovely one; oh kiſs me, kiſs me with the Kiſſes of thy Mouth, for thy Love is better then Wine, oh thou beautiful one, thy Love overcomes my heart, thy Love draweth me after thee; oh thou art pleaſant unto me, thy

preſence

preſence is more deſirable then all things my heart can deſire; oh, if thou hidſt thy Face, thou bountiful one, then am I bowed down, for the ſmiles of thy comely Countenance is the rejoycing of my Heart, and the glading of my Soul, the refreſhing of my Spirit, as marrow to my Bones, and ſtrength to my Reins; oh, thou art my Joy in Sorrow, my Comfort in Mourning, my Help in Need, my Strength in Weakneſs, my Riches in Poverty, my Bread in Hunger, my Water in Thirſt, my Refuge from Storms, my Shelter from Heat, and as the ſhadow of a Rock to me in a weary Land; oh, how can I but love thee in thy Love, thou lovely one; oh, thou art my Mother who hath travelled in great pain to bring me forth, thou art the Womb that bore me, and the Paps that gave me ſuck, the Cradle of my reſt, and the Bed of repoſe; oh can I forget thee? how can I forget thee who hath done ſo much for me, even that which no man could do? oh, thou lovedſt me firſt before I loved thee, thou lovely one, and with thy Love thou woedſt me, and by thy Love thou overcameſt my heart, and drew it after thee; and now thou amiable one, the deſire of my ſoul is unto thee, and unto the remembrance of thy Love; oh, my Soul deſireth thee in the Night ſeaſon, and in the Morning I will ſeek thee early; thou art as a cluſter of Campire, and as a bundle of Mirrh unto me, thou ſhalt lie all Night between my Breaſts; oh thou lovely one, let me repoſe in thy Boſom, and fold me in thy Arms; oh, thy Love, thy Love overcomes my Heart, thy Beauty even makes me ſick of Love; oh, let me remember thy Love more then Wine, it is the upright loves thee, and it is the pure in heart who ſeeth thy Beauty, and beholdeth thy excellent Comelineſs; oh, let thy Love ſtill draw me after thee, oh, let me never leave thee, oh, that I may never forſake thee, nor be unmindful of thy Love which I have known to be ſtronger then Death, and him who hath the power of Death; oh,

Oh, thou art a Tree of Life to those who take hold on thee, and blessed is every Soul that retaineth thee; Oh, thy ways are ways of Pleasantness, and all thy paths are green and delightsom to those who love thee; oh in thee is my rest, in thee is my peace, in thee is my joy, in thee is my comfort, in thee obtain I blessing and happiness; thou art my Joy, and the Crown of my Rejoycing for ever and for evermore; Oh, wherefore hold me, hold me with thy Love, thou Lovely Blessed One, and let me never depart from thee, and then I know thou wilt never depart from me; but I shall be thine, and thou shalt be mine in a perpetual Covenant, which never shall be broken; Oh thou Comely Beautiful Choice One, thy Riches is durable, for the Glory, the glory, the glory of the Lord thy God is thy Dowry for evermore: Unto whom be ascribed all honour and glory, eternal praises and renown, and everlasting dominion for evermore; so be it saith my Soul, and Amen saith my Spirit; Oh come Lord Jesus, come quickly, and take unto thy self thy great power to Reign, for thou art worthy, worthy saith my Soul; glory to thee in the highest for evermore, *Amen.*

Written in Edmonds-Bury *common Goal in the year* 1665.

William Bennit.

This

This to go among Friends to be Read among them when assembled together in the pure Fear and Wisdom of God.

DEarly beloved *Friends* and *Brethren*, *Sheep* of the Lords Pasture, *Lambs* of the Lords Flock, and *Lillies* of the Lords Field; the comely beautiful Garment of Innocency, Meekness, Love, Truth and Righteousness which doth cover many of you, even affecteth my Heart, and inclineth my Soul dearly to love you, and Spirit to travel for your Welfare, Tranquility and Preservation even in every particular respect, desiring the Lord God of Blessings may Bless and Prosper you in Truth and Righteousness, and that his Grace and Love, Mercy and Peace, with Joy and Consolation, Strength and Wisdom may be augmented and multiplied in and unto all your Souls, that so the encrease of him (the fulness of all durable Riches) to your Souls you may witness, and that the Fountain of Life (with whom is the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledg) may be inlarged unto you, that of his fulness you daily may receive, whereby your Hearts may be opened and enlarged more and more unto the Lord, and one unto another, and that the sence of his Goodness and loving Kindness, Mercy, Pity and Compassion shed abroad and manifested towards you, may always be fresh in and upon your hearts that indeed the largness of his endless unchangable, unspeakable Love may be by your Souls admired, and be an engagement and tye upon every particular one to oblige your Hearts, and bind your Souls unto the Lord God, and unto his immutable invinceable Truth; oh dear Friends, much hath the Lord done for us, and let his doings be still marvelous in our eyes, & let his own Works shew forth his Praise, whose Mercies endureth

endureth for ever; dear Friends, the Lord God of Compaſſion ſought and found us out, in the cloudy, diſmal, dark Day, when we were ſcattered upon the barren Mountains and dry Heaths, wandering as ſilly Sheep without a Shepherd; but now hath he gathered us together, and even made us a Family like a Flock, and brought us down into the low Valley, and hath given us freſh and green Paſture to Feed in, and ſtreams of living Water to Drink of; and now the Lord (the Almighty *Jehovah*) is our Shepherd, and his everlaſting powerful Name our Fold, and therefore are we not Conſumed, though the Beaſts of the Field have come forth againſt us, to deſtroy us, and the roaring devouring *Lyons* have been very greedy of their Prey, yet are we preſerved unto this day, becauſe the Lord hath been our defence on the right hand, and on the left, who hath and doth Fight for mount *Sion*; and as the Hills are round about *Jeruſalem*, ſo hath the Lord been, ſtill is, and will be round about his People, as the munition of Rocks for evermore, and their Bread ſhall not fail, and their Water ſhall be ſure; O let all that fear the Lord truſt in him whoſe Mercies are everlaſting.

Oh dear Friends, the Lord once found us in a ſollitary Place, and in a waſte howling Wilderneſs, Hungry & Thirſty; Naked and Deſolate, our way hedged up as with Bryers and Thorns, and there muſt we have Periſhed, had not the tender God of Bowels looked upon us with an eye of Pity and Compaſſion, and helped us in the day of our Diſtreſs; how did he lop the Bough with Terrour, and the ſtrong one of ſtature he hewed down; he did cut up the Thicket of the Foreſt, as with *Iron*, and *Lebanon* did fall by a ſtrong Arm, and made a way for us in the Wilderneſs, and a path through the Thickets; he laid low the Mountains before us, and removed away the Hills, and made the crooked Paths ſtrait before us, and was a Refuge to us from the Storm, and a Shelter to us from the Heat, and

as the ſhadow of a Rock unto us in a weary Land; and now hath he brought us into a right Way, which leads to a City of Habitation, to a quiet dwelling Place, where the Lord feeds his Flock, and cauſeth them to lie down at Noon-day; oh marvellous are the Works of the Lord, and the Living can ſing of his Mercies, his tender Compaſſion faileth not towards the Houſe of *Jacob*, he is a Father unto *Iſrael*, and *Ephraim* is his firſt Born; let *Judah* ſhew forth is Praiſes, whoſe Mercy endureth for ever.

Oh dear Children of my heavenly Father, remember we once ſate as by the Rivers of *Babylon*, and Weeping we thought upon *Sion*, Mourning in the ſence of our ſeparation from her, even as a Woman Mourneth for her only Son; and then we could not ſing the Lords Song in a ſtrange Land, but were as a *Dove* without her Mate, and the alone *Sparrow* upon the Houſe top; as the *Pelican* in the Wilderneſs, and as the alone *Quaile* in the ſtubble Field; as a Woman forſaken and grieved in Spirit, asking the way to *Sion* with our Faces thither-ward, ſaying in our hearts we would be joyned again unto the Lord in a perpetual Covenant never to be broken.

And how graciouſly hath the Lord returned again our Captivity, as ſtreams in the South, and hath brought us on the way to *Sion*, with Joy and Gladneſs, and our Sighing and Mourning is in meaſure fled away; oh the Lord is worthy to be Feared, and his holy Name is worthy to be Honoured, and Magnified in the Congregation of the Righteous, for his Mercies abids for ever.

Oh dear Babes, we who once did ſit in Darkneſs, have ſeen a great and glorious Light, and unto us who once ſat under the Region and ſhadow of Death is the Light of Life riſen, and the bleſſed day ſprung from on high ſhineth in our Habitation, and the Lord is unto us an everlaſting Light, and

let

let us for evermore walk in his Light, as becometh Children of Light, ſhining (in our holy Lives and blameleſs unſpoted Converſations) as Lights in the World, to the Praiſe and Glory of God whoſe Goodneſs and Mercy is without end.

Dear Babes, the Lord hath brought us forth of the Priſon Houſe, and lifted us up out of the dark miery Dungeon; he hath raiſed us out of the Duſt, and taken us as from the Dung-hill, to ſet us among Princes, and to inherit the ſeat of Renown, which is the Chair of Humility.

Oh the Height and Depth, Length and Breadth of the Love, Goodneſs and Mercy of the Lord, let our hearts be rent and broken before him, and humbled in his Preſence, and let us walk before his Holineſs, and tremble at his Word, and bow down uhto his holy Name, and ſtand in awe of the Lord, for whom Praiſes waits in *Sion*.

Now ſeeing the Lord hath done ſo much for our Souls, let us wait upon him for Strength and Power daily, thereby to endure, to anſwer the largneſs of his Love in all Obedience and Faithfulneſs to him, who hath broke our Bands aſunder and ſnapt our Cords in pieces; and now dear Friends, let us ſtand ſtedfaſt in that Liberty whereinto the Lord by his Truth hath brought us, and not be intangled with the Yoke of Bondage as too too many are, who were once made Free by the Lord; oh how have ſome for fear of Perſecution ſtarted aſide out of the narrow Way, into the broad Way; and ſome for the Love, Favour and Honour of this World are departed from the Faith, and have made Shipwrack of a good Conſcience; and ſome through the deceitfulneſs of Riches; and ſome through the Cares and Cumbrances of this World, the Seed of God is Choked again, and the Earth is come over it again, and the World hath eaten up their Hearts, and their Minds are become carnal again, and the Goodneſs of the Lord is forgotten by them, and the Spirit of Slumber hath ſhut them

them up; and for theſe doth my Soul mourn in ſecret, and travel for their Reſtoration, and in the ſence of what is come upon them, how can we but Fear and Dread the Lord, and Watch and Pray, and keep cloſe to the ſaving preſerving power of his Grace which hath kept us unto this day, Praiſes to his Name for ever.

Oh Babes, we had need continually to ſtand upon our watch Tower having the Loins of our Minds girded up unto God, with the Girdle of Truth, having on the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs and the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation and the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, that we may be able to ſend off the Fiery Darts of the Emeny within, and be able to ſhun his Wiles, and to keep out of his Snares, that we may never be betrayed of the ſimplicity and innocency of Truth as it is in Jeſus.

Oh how hath he prevailled over ſome, and drawn them into a ſelf ſeparation, and particularily from the Body which is joyned unto Chriſt the Head, from whom the Body receiveth Vertue, whereby every Member is Nouriſhed, and all comes to ſupply its Place and Office in the Body, and ſo is of ſervice to the Body, as it keeps its Order; and ſo every Member being in unity one with another, are as meet helps one to another; and ſo the Strong in ſome things may help the Weak, and the Weak in ſome things may help the Strong; ſo that the Hand cannot ſay unto the Foot, I have no need of thee, but every Member to be as Servants one to another, and all in Subjection to Chriſt the Head, that the encreaſe of the Body may be witneſſed unto the Edifying of it ſelf in Love.

Dear Friends, if ſome who under pretence of ceaſing from Man, and Words, and Forms, *&c.* doth abſent from the Aſſemblies of the Righteous, and withdraw from the Meetings of the People of God, *&c.* yet I hope the Lord will preſerve you from that Spirit, and I hope the Love and Power of his

his Truth will ſtir up your Hearts and conſtrain you to be very diligent and faithful in meeting together in the holy Fear and Name of the Lord God, to wait diligently upon, him in the meaſure of his Light, Life and Truth received, that ſo ye may daily receive Teaching, Counſel and Inſtruction from the Lord, and receive of his heavenly Dew and Vertue, whereby you may daily be Quickned, Warmed and Inlivened in the inward man, and be kept alive unto God, Green and Freſh as the *Willow* by the Rivers ſide, as the *Lillies* in the Vallies, and as a watered Garden, giving a ſweet ſmell and delectable ſavour, that the Bleſſings from on high may be ſhowred down upon you more and more, that your Fruit may encreaſe to the praiſe of his holy Name.

So dear Babes, I commit you unto the Preſervation and Protection of the Lord God, who in this the day of great Tryals, hath mightily ſtopped the raging Sea, and hath limited the proud Waves thereof, and hath ſhut up her Floods as he hath ſeen meet; oh let every poor little tender honeſt hearted one put their truſt in the Lord, if they be never ſo Poor, Weak and Feeble in their own Eyes, let them caſt their care upon the Lord, for he careth for them, and rely upon the arm of his Mercy, and hope in his tender Bowels, and he will be Strength to thee who (without him) art Weak; and he will be Riches to thee who (without him) art Poor; believe and truſt thou in him, and hearken not to the falſe Accuſer, neither joyn to the Conſulter; but be ſtill and know the Lord is God all-ſufficient for thee, and all thoſe that lean upon him for Help, and that depend upon him for power, he is able and ready to ſave in the hour of Temptation, to ſupport in the day of Tryal, to uphold in the greateſt Storm, and to keep in Patience until it be over and gone, and a Calm comes again.

Dear Friends and Brethren, in that Love which is unſpeak-

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able doth my Soul dearly salute you and imbrace you, sympathising with you in your Tryals, desiring to Mourn with all them that Mourn, and to Rejoyce with them that Rejoyce, and unto him you are left, who is able to Comfort the Mourners among you, and is ready to lift up the Light of his refreshing Countenance upon the heavy hearted, and bowed down under the burdens of the Righteous Seed, & to strengthen the feeble Knees and to heal the Wounded, and bind up the broken in heart, that they that hath, or doth sit in the solitary place of Mourning may be filled with the Joy of the Lord, and that they that yet are bowed down with the false Accuser of the Brethren, and lie mourning in the pit of Distrust, Unbelief and Desparation, may mount upon the wings of Faith, unto the holy hill of *Zion*, thereon to stand with the Lamb, and to sing the new Song which none can sing but the Redeemed of the Lord, so be it saith my Soul.

From your true Friend and Companion in the Faith and Patience, and long Suffering of Jesus, who is often with you in Spirit, though in Body Separated and Confined from you, being still close shut up in Prison, with several of the Lords Lambs, whose good Presence is with us, blessed be his Name, upon whom we wait for Deliverance, believing that the Almighty God, who delivered Just *Lot* from the Wicked *Sodomits*, whose Ungodliness vexed his Righteous Soul from day to day; and who delivered his People of Old out of *Egypt*, and freed them out of the Hands of oppressing *Pharaoh*; and who delivered *David* out of the Paw of the *Lyon*, out of the Paw of the *Bear*, and from the hands of the uncircumcised *Philistine*; who delivered *Jeremiah* out of the low miery Dungeon, and *Daniel* out of the *Lyons* Den; who delivered the three Children out of the Fiery Furnace, and *Paul* and *Silas* out of the Prison-House (he the Living God, who changeth not, whose hand is not shortned that it cannot save) will

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at this day deliver his People out of all their Sufferings, and free them of their Burdens, Weights and grievous Oppressions in his own time, Blessed are all they that durst not look out at time, as some have done to their one hurt, but wait patiently upon the Lord, who can change Times and Seasons as he pleaseth; who dwelleth in the Heavens, and also ruleth over the Kingdoms of men, and setteth up and throweth down as he pleaseth; who seeth all the Works of the Sons of men, and pondereth all their doings; he is a God of Knowledg, and by him actions are weighed; he excelleth in Strength, Power, Wisdom and Mercy, and his Throne is from everlasting, and his Kingdom without end; who is God over all blessed for evermore.

Let none get into a false security because of the present Calm, the Lord can suffer a Storm, and make a Calm again, when he pleaseth; let all Watch and Pray, and Fear before the Lord, and wait upon him to be fitted for Tryals, that so no Storm may come upon you before you are aware of it, and before you be ready for it.

Dear Babes, Read and Feel my Love in the Truth, and therein let not your Love be wanting one to another, but live in Love, Unity and Peace, and the God of Love and Peace be with you, and his Blessings rest upon you, Farwel dear Friends.

Edmonds-Bury *common Goal this 25th. of the first Month* 1667.

William Bennit.

A Teſtimony to the True Light that lightens every Man that comes into the World.

The People that did ſit in Darkneſs have ſeen a great and glorious Light, and unto thoſe that were under the Region and Shadow of Death is the Light of Life ariſen, and the Bleſſed Day ſprung from on high, and ſhineth in their Tabernacles; and that which they have ſeen, heard, felt and taſted of, the ſame they have and do bear Teſtimony unto, though few there be that have received their Teſtimony.

For who hath believed our Report, and unto whom is the Arm of the Lord Revealed.

But come ye, O Houſe of Iſrael, *and let us walk in the Light of the Lord.*

THE Light revealed within is the (narrow) Way to Life Eternal; and the Door into the Fold of Everlaſting Reſt: The Light is the Entrance into the freſh and green Paſture wherein the Lord feedeth his Flock, and cauſeth them to lie down in peace and quietneſs, out of the reach of the Beaſts of prey: The Light leads and draweth thoſe that obey it, out of Darkneſs, and from under the region and ſhadow of Death into the Land of the Living, there to dwell under the region & ſhadow of Light and Life: The Light breaks the Bonds of Sin in pieces, and ſnappeth the Cords of Iniquity aſunder, and ſets the Soul free from the Bondage of Corruption, to ſerve the Lord in the Life

Life of Righteouſneſs: The Light draweth and leadeth thoſe that believe in it, and obey it, out of the Alienation and Separation from God, into the Everlaſting Covenant of Life and Love, where the Soul is in unity with the Lord: The Light ſearcheth the Heart, and operateth in the ſecrets of the Minds of thoſe that obey it, and like unto Leaven worketh the Heart and Mind into its own nature, frame and quality: The Light is Pure, Holy and Undefiled, and hath no unity with the leaſt impure Thought, Word or Work, but Judgeth and Condemns it: The Light is Meek, Contrite, Lowly and Humble,& condemns that honour that is corrupt, and is from below, and ſtandeth in reſpect of Perſons; and it ſeeketh the honour of God only: The Light Baptizeth ſelf into Death, ſlayes the Boaſter, puts Fleſh to ſilence, that God may ſpeak in his Temple, who is not to be denied the Mouth to ſpeak by: The Light is the heavenly Treaſure in the earthen Veſſel, that brings honour and glory unto God: The Light hath no fellowſhip with Darkneſs; he that ſaith he is in the Light, and hath unity with the Light, and yet loveth and walketh in Darkneſs, lyeth, and the Light hath no room, place or entertainment in his heart: The Light teacheth thoſe that love it to love Enemies; its fruit is Love, no Envy, no Malice, no Hatred, no Bitterneſs, no Enmity, no Prejudice, no Diſcord, no Backbiting, no Reviling, no evil Whiſpering proceedeth from the Light; the Light condemns it all, and that ground from whence it ſprings: The Light hath no unity with any unfruitful works of Darkneſs, but reproves them: The Light teacheth to render Good for Evil, and to forgive Enemies, and to pray for Perſecutors, and to have love and good will to all People, and to ſeek and deſire the Eternal good and wel-fare of all Souls; he that hates and envies his Enemies abideth not in the Light; Envy is of the Evil-one; he that ſaith he walketh in the Light, and hates

his Brother, lyeth, and errs from the Truth: The Light teacheth to love God with thy whole heart, and thy Neighbour, or Brother, as thy ſelf; *He that ſaith he loves God and hates his Brother, is a Lyer, he that loveth him that begetteth, doth alſo love thoſe that are begotten of him; Love thinketh no Ill to Enemies, much leſs to Brethren:* The Light leadeth his Children into Love, Peace and Unity with God, and one with another in the Life of Righteouſneſs; oh the unity, the unity of Brethren in the Light, Love and Life of God is exceeding precious and comely, its compared like to precious Oyl, poured on the Head, that runs down on the Beard, even *Aarons* Beard, that went down to the skirts of his Garment, and like the dew of *Hermon*, and like the dew that deſcended upon the Mountain of *Sion*, where the Bleſſing is, and where the Lord maketh unto his People a Feaſt of fat things: The Light teacheth, and maketh to be of one Heart, of one Mind, of one Soul, and (in all thoſe that walk in it) begetteth one conſent to ſerve and worſhip the only wiſe God, in the one Spirit and one Truth: The Light giveth a good Underſtanding, a clear Diſcerning, a ſound Judgment: The Light leadeth not into ſtrife and contention, nor into rents, diviſions and parties, nor into a particularity and ſelf-ſeparation from the Body, nor into ſelf-conceitedneſs, nor into high airy notions, nor into a climing up in imaginations after high diſcoveries; (and ſo ſlight the day of ſmall things, and neglect thy obedience to the preſent gift, through an expectation of ſomething greater to come yet unrevealed; and ſuch, like *Lucifer*, mounts high in their Conceits and Imaginations, but will fall to the ſide of the Pit;) but the Light condemns all this, and judges that Spirit that leadeth thereinto; which Spirit ſoweth Diſcord among Brethren, which is Abomination; and that Spirit leadeth ſome to ſpeak evil of Dignities, and to diſpiſe Dominion, and to rebel againſt the Order and Government

vernment of the Lamb: The Light judgeth that Spirit that ſetteth up, and keepeth up (out of the comly deſcent order of Truth) that thing that tends to ſtrife and breaking unity among Brethren: The Light teacheth thoſe that love it, to ſeek and endeavour for Love, Peace and Unity among Brethren, with all Self-denial: The Light teacheth to take away the occaſion of ſtumbling in thy Brothers way: The Light teacheth to be very wary and careful of giving Enemies advantage to ſtrengthen themſelves againſt Truth, and the Wicked occaſion to reproach it, and thoſe that live in it: The Light teaches to live and walk in a holy godly Life, and blameleſs Converſation, as becometh the Goſpel of Truth, and as becometh Saints of the Moſt High: The Light, in thoſe that love it, crucifieth the Fleſh with the luſts and affections thereof, and teacheth thoſe that love it, how to poſſeſs their Veſſels in Sanctification and Honour: The Light crucifieth the Heart unto the World and worldly things, and redeemeth the Mind from the Earth and earthly things: and teacheth to uſe the World as if thou uſedſt it not: The Light draweth the Mind out of the many things (where all offend) into the one thing needful, which giveth not, nor receiveth an offence, but judges the offences, and that ground from whence they come: The Light is Supernatural, and is to over-rule the Naturals, and to keep them within the bonds of the Government of Truth, and to limit the affectionate part from leading and drawing the Heart and Mind into things below, into created Objects, and into Bondage to the cares of this Life, and troubles and cumbrances of this World, which doth not profit but hinder to God-ward: The Light is the Girdle of the Loins, of the Mind, of thoſe that love it, to gird up their Hearts and Minds unto God, that in him their peace may be perfect: The Light is a ſtop to thoſe Thoughts which are reproveable by it; The Light is a Bridle to the

Tongue

Tongue, and they that know it ſo to be, dare not ſay (in a ſelf-will) our Tongues are our own, and we will ſpeak: The Light ruleth over the Souls and Bodies of thoſe that believe in, love, follow and obey it, and teacheth and enableth ſuch to yield their Members Servants of Righteouſneſs unto God, even as they have (when they were Servants to Sin) yeilded their Members Servants to Unrighteouſneſs, and of Iniquity unto Iniquity: The Light is the Author of the true and living Faith, which giveth victory over the World, and is a ſhield unto the Soul to fend off the fiery darts of the Devil, and worketh by Love to the purifying of the Heart: The Light is the Author to the true Hope, which is an Anchor unto the Soul, ſure and ſtedfaſt, and is held in a pure Conſcience void of Offence towards God and Man: The Light is the Author of true Patience, long Suffering, Forbearance, Forgiveneſs and Contentedneſs; it teacheth to be patient in all Tryals, Tribulations, Troubles Straits and Difficulties, and teacheth in all conditions to be contented, and not to murmur againſt the Lord whatſoever he permit to come to paſs: The Light teacheth his Children to love one another fervently, with a clean heart; oh, how good is God to *Iſrael*, to them that are of a clean heart: The Light teacheth to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace: The Light teacheth the Younger to yield and ſubmit themſelves to the Elder, in the Lord, and to hearken unto Counſel, Inſtruction and Reproof; he teacheth all his Children to be ſubject one to another; he cloathes them with Humility, adorneth them with Meekneſs, and beautifies them with lowlineſs of Spirit: The Light teacheth the Strongeſt to condeſend to the Weakeſt, and to ſerve the Meaneſt in Love, to bear with the infirmities of the Feeble, to help and hold up the Halting, and to draw forward the backward with the Cords of Love, and to caſt a Garment over thy Brothers Nakedneſs: The Light

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in thoſe that love it, puts out the eye that watcheth for evil, and condemneth that part that boaſteth it ſelf, and rejoyceth at anothers fall, and ſtrengthens it ſelf with prejudice againſt another through his failing, which thing is as moſt abominable filth in the pure eye of the Light: The Light doth not countenance evil in any, but judges and diſcovers it, though hid under a profeſſion of Truth The Light is like unto the Touchſtone that trys Silver from Tin, it tryeth and diſcovereth the Good from the Bad; it tryeth Motions, Thoughts, Words, Works and Spirits: The Light is a Stone which God hath laid in *Sion*, Elect and Precious, which they that believe, ſhall not be aſhamed, and unto thoſe that believe he is very Precious; but unto them that believe not, he is as a Stone of ſtumbling, and a Rock of offence, at whom the ſeeming wiſe Maſter-Builders have, and do ſtumble; and he whom the wiſe Profeſſors of this Age, and great Rabbies, and Learned Orators ſet at nought, the ſame is become the Head and Chief Corner Stone in Gods Houſe; by the vertue of which Stone they that believe in him are quickened, and made living Stones, meet to be joyned unto him (the Light) in whom the Building being fitly framed together, groweth up unto an holy Temple in the Lord: The Light was in the beginning before the Darkneſs was, and is now made manifeſt to extinguiſh the Darkneſs, and to fill the dark corners of the Earth with the bright beams of his Glory; he is the Firſt and the Laſt; he was before Time, and will remain when that which in time is paſſed away: The Light is the Beginning and the End, the Foundation and Top-ſtone, the Root and Off-ſpring of *David*, and the Bright Morning-Star, whoſe bleſſed Day *Abraham* ſaw, and was glad; he dwelt among the ſeven golden Candleſticks, and was with the Church in the Wilderneſs, in the days of old: He is the Light of the holy City, *New-Jeruſalem*, which *John* (in the Lords Day) ſaw coming down

down from God, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband: The Light giveth the Churches to know, that it is he that ſearcheth the Heart, and tryeth the Reins, from whom no Hypocrite in *Sion* can be hid; who ſaid, *I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give unto every one according as his Work* But who ſhall abide the Day of his Coming, (in which the Heavens paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements melt with fervent heat) and who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth, who is like Refiners Fire, and like Fullers Soap, purifying his Sanctuary, and cleanſing his Temple in which he delights to dwell? He is the Word that was in the beginning, by whom all things were made that was made; and in him there is Life, and his Life is the Light of men; and he is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the World; he is the Expreſs Image of his Fathers Glory, and is called the Son of God, in whom dwelleth all fulneſs of Joy, Happineſs and Eternal Felicity; who is God over all, and above all, bleſſed, bleſſed for ever and evermore, *Amen*.

W. B.

OH, happy and bleſſed are the People, who though they once were Darkneſs, yet now are Light in the Lord; Oh, walk ye, oh, walk ye as Children of the Light bearing the pure Image of the Father of Lights, in whom is no Darkneſs at all, nor variableneſs or ſhadow of turning; but is the ſame yeſterday, ſo to day, and for evermore.

Friends

FRiends that are Sufferers upon Truths account in *Edmonds-Bury* Goal, are in a measure of health (through the Love, Goodneſs and Mercy of the Lord, bleſſed and magnified be his Name) this 7*th* day of the 10*th* Month 1667. and their dear love in the precious Truth dearly reaches forth unto all faithful Friends every where, and you are often in their remembrance, deſiring the Lord may proſper you, and bleſs you with all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, and keep you with us, and the whole *Iſrael* of God, by his Almighty Power through Faith in his Name, unto his Heavenly Kingdom, and enable us all to finiſh the work the Lord hath given us (by his Power) to do; that we may glorifie him on Earth, that he may glorifie us with himſelf, with that glory he had before the World began; even ſo be it; and *Amen* ſaith my Soul.

To Friends, Sufferers in Norwich-Caſtle.

DEar Suffering *Lambs*, whom the *Wolves* ſeek to Rend and Devour, in the tender Love of the great Shepherd and Biſhop of your Souls, is my heart opened to you, to viſit you with a few Lines, and in the name of my God and your God, my Father and your Father, I ſay unto you, he whom you ſerve hath ſeen your Afflictions, and hath beheld your Sufferings, and hath took notice of your Burdens, and cognizence of your grievous Oppreſſions, and hath heard your Groanings, and hath beheld your Tears; he aſſuredly will in his own time rebuke your Enemies, and plead your innocent Cauſe with your Oppreſſors, and eaſe you of, and free you from your great Afflictions; therefore, dear ſuffering Lambs of my heavenly Father, lift up your Heads in the Name of the Lord God, and take Courage and be Strong in his Power and Truth which is in you, and with you, and on your ſides, and it is the Truth that ſhall prevail againſt all its Enemies, and its Oppoſers ſhall be Confounded, and the Truth of our God ſhall Flouriſh over all; therefore, dear Hearts, ſtill cleave to the precious Truth of God made known unto you, and let nothing ſeparate you from it; oh, bleſſed be the Lord that he hath begotten ſuch a Love in you to him and his Truth, that ſuch is your love thereunto, that you are willing to undergo Reproaches, Abuſes and ſpoyling of your Goods, Impriſonment, and to be ſeparated from your Friends and Relations for Truths ſake; oh, dear Lambs, great is your Reward if you abide to the end, and faint not in well doing; oh, my heart is open to you in the tender Love and Bowels of *Emanuel*, and my ſoul is refreſhed in your Faithfulneſs,

Faithfulneſs, and though many of your Faces I never ſaw, yet I am one with you in your Sufferings, wherein my ſoul ſimpathiſeth with you, and hath unity with your Teſtimony for the Lord, and my ſpirit doth praiſe the Lord, the God of your Salvation, on your behalf, in that he hath ſo mightily upheld you, and born you up in his Arms, in the midſt of your Tryals; though you of your ſelves are Weak, yet the Lord is Strong, whoſe Strength you know by experience is manifeſted in Weakneſs; therefore truſt hope and depend you upon the Lord forever, who is and will be your exceeding great reward; caſt your care upon him, for he your God careth for you and yours; he is a Father to the Fatherleſs, and a Husband to the Widow, he is the Comforter of the Comfortleſs, and gladeth the heavy hearted.

Oh, be ſtill, quiet, patient and contented in your Minds; and wait upon the Lord, and be not at all terrifyed by your Adverſaries; but in the lowly fear of the Lord God rejoyce in that he hath counted you worthy, not only to believe, but to ſuffer for his Name ſake; oh, your Reward no man can take away, as you continue faithful to the Lord; dear Lambs, my Bowels yearn towards you, and in the Fathers love I ſalute you, deſiring that Grace, Mercy and Peace may reſt upon you, and the bleſſing of the moſt High diſtil upon you as dew upon the tender Herbs, that you, ye tender Plants, may grow and be like *Willows* by the Water Courſes, and as *Cedars* by the Rivers ſide, that your Leaf may not wither, neither ceaſe bearing Fruit; ſo dear ſuffering Lambs, as none is to be(through Joy)Exalted above what is meet,ſo none(through Sorrow) is to be Dejected, or caſt down, but every one, in all Conditions, is to learn to be Contented with the will of the Lord, and none to murmur againſt the Lord, becauſe of the Proſperity of the Wicked, and Advancement of *Sions* Enemies;for though they ſeem to Flouriſh like a green Bay-Tree,

yet they will become like Graſs upon the Houſe top, that withereth before it is grown up.

So unto the Lord God I commit you, who careth for all his, and is a preſent help in the time of need, and leaveth not his *Sheep* and *Lambs* when the *Wolves* come to Devour; but he the mighty God ſtandeth by his People, and fighteth for mount *Sion*, and defends the Hills thereof, and will put to flight her Enemies, and with the Breath of his Mouth expel and ſcatter the Clouds, Fogs and Miſts that ariſeth out of the bottomleſs pit of Darkneſs; that then, oh *Sion*, thy Glory may appear as the Morning without Clouds, and as the Sun in its Brightneſs thy Beauty may ſhine forth, and thy Enemies be Aſtoniſhed and Confounded forever.

This is the ſalutation of my Love, who am your Fellow Sufferer and Companion, in the Patience and Tribulation of Jeſus, the Lord God be with you, and ſupport the weak and little ones among you, and keep you all Faithful to the end, and preſerve you in Love and Unity one with another, *Amen*, ſaith my ſoul.

Bury Goal
1669.

William Bennit.

Dearly

Dearly Beloved

FRiends, Brethren and Sifters in the Heavenly Spiritual Relation of the Immortal Incorruptible Seed of Life Eternal, of which you are born again, and become Heirs of an Inheritance that is Everlaſting, by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, in and from whom Joy and Peace, Mercy and Grace be multiplyed in and unto all your Souls, *Amen*.

Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who through his abundant Mercy and free Grace hath called us, and with the Arms of his Everlaſting Kindneſs hath gathered us, and by his Almighty Power hath raiſed us up, to be unto him a People, to live unto him in his Life, and to walk before him in Truth and Righteouſneſs, and to Serve and Worſhip him in his own Way and Spirit, and to bear Teſtimony thereunto, and againſt the contrary, in Word and Doctrine, in Life and Converſation; and for our Teſtimonies ſake the Nations are angry with us, and the Earth is moved, and the Waters troubled, and ſwell againſt us, as if we ſhould be ſwollowed up, and wholly over-whelmed with the Floods of the Wrath of the *Dragon*, who ſeeks to drown the bleſſed and glorious appearance of the man Child; who is to rule the Nations in Juſtice, in Mercy, in Judgment, in Righteouſneſs and Truth; well, my dear Friends, though at this day we are a ſuffering People, and as it were Killed all the day long, and appointed *Sheep* for the Slaughter, and are ſet as a prey for the Beaſt of the Field, and *Lyons* of the Forreſt, and though the Jaws of Death, and Gates of Hell ſeem to be opened wide againſt us, as if we ſhould be ſwallowed up quick, and be extinguiſhed from being a People; yet notwithſtanding we can rejoyce in the Lord our God, becauſe

our

our ſufferings are inflicted upon us not for evil doing, but for well doing, and our Enemies have found no juſt Cauſe given them of us, thus to give us up to the Spoylers, and into the hands of Wicked, Ungodly, Unreaſonable men; but altogether without a Cauſe given of us, have they taken an occaſion againſt us (as *Daniel*'s Perſecutors did againſt him) concerning the Law, Commands and Worſhip of our God, ſo that at this day our God knows it, Angels and Men know it, and our Enemies one day ſhall be made to know it to their ſorrow, that we are a Suffering Perſecuted People, ſingly for our Conſcience towards God, and for our Obedience and Faithfulneſs to him; therefore, my dearly beloved Ones, rejoyce in the Lord, and lift up your Heads in his Name, over all the Wrath and Cruelty of the Ungodly, and think not ſtrange concerning the Fiery Tryals that are come to try you, and to prove your Love to God his Way and Truth, as though ſome ſtrange thing had happened unto you; but rejoyce in the lowly fear of the Lord, inaſmuch as you are made partakers of the Sufferings of the Seed, that when its glory ſhall be more and more revealed in and upon your Souls, you may rejoyce with exceeding Joy, in that you ſuffer on Gods account, not as Murderers and Evil doers; but as true Chriſtians, and Followers of Chriſt Jeſus, and true Worſhipers of the God of *Daniel* in Spirit and in Truth.

And my dear Friends, if ye ſuffer the ſpoyling of your Goods, Bonds, Baniſhment or Death for meeting together in the Fear and Name of the Lord, to wait upon him, and for performing you Duty and Obedience unto him, and for keeping of your Conſciences void of offence towards him, truly the Cauſe is good, and worth the ſuffering for, it is not our own Cauſe, but the Lords; therefore let us commit it unto him unto whom we can make our Appeal, and ſpread our Complaint before him, and pour forth our Cries unto him who ſeeth

seeth our Troubles, and beholdeth the grievous Oppression, and manifold Burdens, Afflictions and Sufferings of his Poor, Abused, Tribulated, Persecuted People, whose innocent Cause he the Almighty *Jevovah*, of worm *Jacob*, will assuredly plead for them, against their Enemies, and wo will be to the Oppressors and Spoylers of Gods Heritage. Dear suffering Lambs, cast your Care upon the Lord, he careth for you, and for your little ones, and hold fast Faith and a good Conscience, whatever you suffer, hold fast the Truth you have received that none may take your Crown of Joy, Comfort, Peace and Blessing from you, and keep in the meekness, patience and long suffering of Jesus, suffering the spoyling of your Goods Joyfully, glorifying the Lord in suffering, according to his will, giving him Thanks and Praise, instead of Murmuring, that he hath counted you worthy not only to Believe, but also to Suffer for his blessed Name sake, knowing in your selves you have in Heaven a far better induring substance; therefore cast not away your Faith, Hope and Confidence which hath such great Recompence of Reward; but truly Friends you have need to abide in the patient long suffering Spirit of Jesus, that after you have done the will of God, and suffered for the same, you may receive the Promise; if any man faint, and turn back, he looses his reward of his sufferings; but I hope, my dear Friends, you are not of the number of those that turn back unto Perdition, but of them that believe, and receive the end of your hope, even the Salvation of your Souls.

And dear Friends, take Courage, and put on Strength, and lift up your Heads in the Name of the Lord, who is with his People, and from them he will not go, he is on our side, and taketh our part, we know it, and our Enemies will feel it to their sorrow, he will fight for us, let us hold our peace, and be still from reasoning with Flesh and Blood, though he suffer us to be tryed, as Gold is tryed in the Fire, yet not wholly to be

Destroyed,

Deſtroyed, after he hath done ſuch great things for us, and appeared on our behalf, and hath manifeſted himſelf to be our God, and we to be his People, and after he hath Bleſſed us, and Proſpered us, and Preſerved us through all the Wrath and Cruelty of men hitherto, and now hath made us a Family like a Flock, and put his Jewels upon us, and Cloathed us with the Garment of Salvation, and Arayed us with the Robe of Righteouſneſs, and Beautified us with his Comlineſs, and Betrothed us unto Himſelf, in Mercy, in Judgment, in Righteouſneſs and in Truth; will he now ſuffer us wholly to be extinguiſhed from being a People? ſhall our Enemies have their full deſires of us, to root us out wholly from amongſt them, that they may blaſpheme our God, and ſay he was not able to Deliver them out of our hand? ſurely no, remember what *Balack* King of *Moab* had Conſulted, & what *Balaam* Son of *Beor* anſwered him, even from *Shittim* unto *Gilgal*, that you may know the Righteouſneſs of the Lord, who keepeth Covenant with his People, neither doth his tender Compaſſions fail unto the Houſe of *Jacob*; therefore let us truſt in the God of our hope; who delivered Juſt *Lot* from the vexation of the wicked *Sodomites*, and his Poor Oppreſſed *Iſrael* out of the hand of cruel *Pharaoh*; who delivered *David* from the paw of the *Bear*, and the paw of the *Lyon*, and from the hand of the uncircumciſed *Philiſtine*; who delivered *Daniel* out of the *Lyons-Den*, and the three Children out of the *Fiery Furnace*; good *Jeremiah* out of the low miery *Dungeon*, and *Paul* and *Silas* out of the *Priſon-Houſe*; he the Living God, whoſe Arm is not ſhortned, nor abated in Strength, Power and Might, will aſſuredly deliver his oppreſſed People at this day, in his own time, when he hath tryed them throughly, and hath Purged his Gold, and refined his Silver, and ſeparated the Chaff from his Wheat, and made up his precious Jewels, and manifeſted the approved in his ſight, then will he

he ariſe, as in *Mount Paron*, and be wrath, as in the Valley of *Gideon*; to bring to paſs his Work, his ſtrange Work, at the hearing thereof, the Ears of many doth and ſhall Tingle, and the Heathen be Aſtoniſhed and Confounded, and fall before the glorious Majeſty of the God of worm *Jacob*; then ſhall *Sion* Rejoyce, and *Iſrael* be right Glad, and the Mourners be Comforted, and the heavy Hearts be Refreſhed, and the Oppreſſed Delivered from the Yoak. The Lord God Almighty haſten the Accompliſhment of his own Work, in his own time, to his own Glory and Renown, Amen.

So my dearly beloved Friends, my heart is open to you, and my Soul ſimpathiſes with you in your Sufferings, and my Crys and Prayers are to the Lord for you, knowing that great and many are your Tryals that doth attend many of you; poor hearts, how willingly could I help you. But unto the Lord the Great Shepherd and Biſhop of your Souls, the Keeper of the Flock of *Iſrael*, I muſt commit you, and reſign you up to him who careth for you, and watcheth over you, and intends good unto you; for he loveth you, though he ſuffers hard things to befall you, which will work for your good, and bring many of you more neerer to the Lord, and make you more and more like him; that though the Hills ſhall be removed, and the Mountains depart, yet his Everlaſting Kindneſs ſhall not be removed, neither the Covenant of his Peace be taken from you his People, that keep Covenant with him your God; ſo the Almighty be with you, in all your Tryals and Temptations, and his Arms of tender merey bear up all the Weak and Little Ones among you, whoſe deſires are Upright before him, that none ſuch may fall through the Fury of the Adverſary, and Temptations of the Enemy; but that you all may be kept by the power of your God, through Faith in his Everlaſting Name, to the end, to finiſh your Teſtimony in Faithfulneſs, with Joy, to his Glory, and

your Endleſs Peace, Happineſs and Filicity in him the God of your Hope, *Amen.*

The God of Peace be with you, and Comfort you with his Love; oh, Lord God Everlaſting, keep all thy dear People in this hour and power of Darkneſs, hide them in the hollow of thy Hand, and let the Banner of thy Love be over them, diſpoſe of them, O Lord, as ſeemeth good unto thee; only let not thy Faithfulneſs to them, and their Faith to thee be wanting, and let them be tendered by thee, as the firſt Fruits unto thee, after the long Night of Apoſtacy, that eclipſed thy Glory from the face of the Earth: My dear love remains with you; Farwel dear Friends.

From your true Friend and Brother, in the Patient Suffering for the Teſtimony of Jeſus.

Edmonds-Bury common Goal this 8th. of the fifth Month.

William Bennit.

The

THE VVork and Mercy of GOD

Conducing to his Praise;

Or a Demonstration of the Visitation of God's Love to my Soul in the days of my Youth;

Being a Testimony of the Light of Christ in the Conscience, which discovereth and judgeth Sin; also (if loved and obeyed) saveth from Sin, and redemeeth the Soul unto God.

Published in bowels of pity and love to all those that have desires after the Way of Truth, and are yet seeking it abroad in their Imaginations, and are mourning and groaning under the burden and weight of Sin; hoping and desiring (that if the Lord will) such may meet with some incouragement and direction hereby, for them to turn their minds into the Light of Christ in themselves, and in it to believe, and wait for power over, and freedom from Sin, that true lasting peace in God they may come to witness, to the true and full satisfaction of their Souls.

All things that are reproved, are made manifest by the Light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is Light, &c. That which may be known of God is manifest in them, &c. Wherewith shall a Young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereunto according to thy Word; thy Word I have hid in my Heart, &c. Eph. 5. 13, &c. Rom. 1. 16. Psal. 1. 19. 9, 11.

VVHen I was but young in Years, the Lord God (of Light, Life and Power, of tender Love, of infinite Compassion and everlasting bowels of Mercy) was pleased then (in some measure) to visit me by or with his pure Light in my own Conscience, which many a

time did check and reprove me for my Sins, and brought my Evil-doings to my remembrance, and judged me in my own Heart for Evil, and sometimes brought trouble upon my Mind for my Sins, but I was not then sensible that it was the Light of Christ Jesus (*who is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the World*) which then in my own Conscience did check, reprove and judge me for Evil, and sometimes broke my false ease and rest in Sin; insomuch as I could not go on in Sin, Wildness and Vanity, without being somewhat troubled, terrified and reproved for my Sin at one time or other; though when I was among idle Children, void of the fear of God, I ran into Sin and Wickedness with them; and for the present time, I acted in Sin with great Delight and Joy; but when I came to be still, quiet and alone in the Fields, or elsewhere; then would the pure Witness of God arise in me with its reproofs, and set my Sins in order before me, and brought my Evil Doings to my remembrance, which I had acted out of the pure fear of the Lord God, and then Trouble for a time took hold on me, and Sin became my burden; but I soon got from under that Burden, at Ease and Liberty again, and ran into Sin and Vanity again; and thus year after year I went on in rebellion against the Witness of God in my own Conscience, taking delight and pleasure in those things I knew were Evil; yet the Lord God (whose tender Bowels of Pity and Compassion did then in Mercy hover over me for good to me in that day) did sometimes stop me from speaking and acting that Evil I intended to speak or do, & preserved me out of many gross Evils, which many others were addicted unto, and overcome with. And in those days when I was alone in the Fields I cryed and prayed unto the Lord, and desires were stirring in me after the knowledge of him, his Way and Truth; but I prayed to a God I knew not; I imagined a God afar off, and did not then know it was the Lord that did

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ſearch my Heart, and diſcovered unto me my Thoughts, and judged me for Sin; I then knew not that that was the Light, Way and Truth of God in my own Heart, which ſometimes begot deſires in me to know the Truth, and to walk therein; but my mind was abroad (as it is with many at this day, who have deſires after Truth and Righteouſneſs, but are ſeeking abroad in Carnal Ordinances, Forms, Likeneſſes, Beggarly Elements, Rudiments of the World, Ceremonies and Traditions of men) and knew not that that in me was Truth, which ſometimes ſtopt me from Lying and Swearing; and when I knowingly told a Lye, it would accuſe me, when no man could accuſe me for it; and as I grew in years, for I may truly ſay, there was ſomething ſtirring in me (at times) after the Lord ever ſince I was 6 or 7 years of Age, and when I came to be about 14 years old, and to be a Prentize, and in outward Thraldom and Bondage, it pleaſed the God of infinite loving-kindneſs, to viſit me more then formerly, by his pure Light and Spirit, which encreaſed in ſtriving with me daily, that I ſcarce knowingly committed any Evil, but the Light would ſoon judge me for it; yea, the Lord God with his pure Light and Gift did perſue me hard, and followed me cloſe, calling to me in my Heart, with his ſtill Voice, to come out of Sin, out of evil Words and Works; but I (like *Samuel* when he was a Child) knew not that it was the Lord that did call; for he was (though near me) as a Stranger to me; and I knew not his Voice, but went aſtray as a wandering Sheep, yet had I deſires to know the way to the Fold, and to know where the Lord feedeth his Flock, and cauſeth them to lie down in Peace, Quietneſs & Reſt, where none can make afraid; for indeed it was Reſt my Soul wanted, and true Peace in God my Soul many a time longed for, and panted after; for, oh, I was oftentimes wounded, wounded, wounded becauſe of Sin, and for want of the enjoyment of the Love and

Peace

Peace of God, I went many a time bowed down in Spirit day after day, with an aking Mind, grieved Soul and wounded Conſcience, with my Eyes full of Tears, and my Heart full of Sighing, thinking in my Heart there was few (if any) in my State and Condition; ſometimes wiſhing, and ſaying in my Heart, *Oh, that I were in a deſert ſolitary place outwardly* (for ſo was my condition inwardly) *where no man inhabits, where I might have Mourned and Wept out my fill, and have poured out my Tears unto the tender God of tender Bowels of Mercy, and have ſpread my Complaints before him whom my Soul did then ſometimes, in meaſure, long, thirſt and pant after, even as the Hart panteth after the water Brooks:* And many a time I did get into a ſolitary place to eaſe my Heart a little, in pouring out my Tears and Complaints to the Lord; for in thoſe daies many were my Prayers and Tears, for great was the burden and load which I oftentimes went under day after day, which made me cry Night and Day to the Lord for Peace and Reſt; yet I then, not knowing that it was the Light of Chriſt in my Conſcience, that did break my Reſt and Peace in Sin, neither knew it to be a ſtay to the Mind, and a bridle to my Tongue; I many a time got into a falſe eaſe and liberty, in idleneſs and wildneſs of Youth, but it was broke again, and Sorrow and Trouble would take hold on my Mind, and true Deſires would again be Renewed in me after the Lord, and breathing and thirſting after Righteouſneſs; and oh, my Heart and Soul was many a time made tender and ſoft; and oh, pity, pity and tender bowels of compaſſion was in me towards any that I thought was in my condition, and a tender love was hid in my Heart towards thoſe that I then thought were the People of God; and I can truly ſay, my Bowels and Heart is open ſtill, and oftentimes Pity, Love, Compaſſion and Tenderneſs iſſues forth in me towards thoſe that now are in that condition I then was in; oh, my Soul,

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my Soul cannot but in some measure simpathize with them, and in Spirit bear a part of their Burdens and Sorrows in my Bosom, & that not without some secret cries in my Heart unto the tender God of Bowels of Pity on their behalf; and partly for their sakes is this published, hoping (that if the Lord will) it may be of service unto some of them, and if the Lord order it so to be to them, or any, then will my end herein be answered thereby.

And in those daies I frequented the Meetings of the People called *Independants* (viz.) *William Bredges*'s Congregation in great *Yarmouth*, whom I then thought were the People of God, and yet I then saw that many of their Lives and Conversations, even some of the chief of them were not consistant with what they professed in words; and when I have been amongst them in the time of their singing Psalms, the pure Witness of God in my own Heart hath (as it were) stoped my Mouth that I could not Sing with them; but my Heart in the time of their singing was broken into tenderness, and many were the tears of my Eyes; and verily my outward man, or earthen Vessel, hath quaked and trembled (this was before I was by Scorners called a Quaker, or had seen any of those People) and shaken like a Leaf that is shaken with the Wind (which might be a sign of that shaking, which since the Lord hath suffered to come upon them, which hath almost shattered and scattered them, who will shake all sandy Foundations, and blast all Professions that are out of the Light and Power of God) by the working of the Light and Power of God in my Heart, though I then knew not that it was the Power of God that brought such a trembling upon me, and that did in some measure let me see, that it was not then a time of singing for me; for I was then in a strange Land, in the Land of Captivity, and could not sing the Song of *Sion*, which I may truly say (not in the least

leaſt enmity towards the People; for my Soul beareth love and good will towards all men, and deſire to tender and own the leaſt true appearance of God in any) they were ignorant of, who were then ſinging what others had preſcribed and made ready for them; I then wanted the enjoyment of the Love, Joy, Peace and ſweet Preſence of God, which maketh glad the Hearts of the Righteous, and cauſeth the lowly, meek and upright to ſing (in the Spirit with underſtanding) for joy; not that Song, or Songs, or Pſalms which men have invented by their human Wiſdom, (from which Wiſdom the Myſteries of God's Kingdom is obſcured and concealed) but the new and living Song, which the Dead cannot ſing, but the Living that are raiſed and redeemed out of, and from the Earth, and from amongſt men, even the ranſomed of the Lord, that are returned from *Babylon* unto Mount *Sion*, whereon they ſtand with the Lamb, whom they have followed through many Tribulations; and have not loved their Lives unto Death; and have waſhed their Garments, and made them white in his Blood, in and by whom they are become Virgins; and have caſt of all old Lovers, and are not defiled with the Woman *Jezabel*; but through the Lamb have gotten Victory over the Whore, Beaſt and falſe Prophet, and in the Heavenly Dominion of the Lamb (by whom they are made more then Conquerors) do they ſtand on the Sea of Glaſs mingled with Fire, with the Harps of God, and can ſing a new Song of praiſe and thankſgiving *unto him that was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore.*

And in all the times of my trouble of mind, and travel of Spirit I never made known how it was with me, nor declared my condition to any Creature, though never ſo intimate with them, but kept it ſecret in my Heart, pouring out my complaints to God, but not unto any man; yet I could gladly have had ſome to have known how it was with me; but I

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was straitned in my self, and kept it in obscurity; and in those dayes I knew not what it was that wrought and strove with me, and did so frequently judge and reprove me for Sin, and gave me power over many Evils which others were overcome withal, and raised strong desires in me after the Lord, and discovered unto me the thoughts of my Heart, I say, I knew not then what it was, I was then not sencible that it was the Light of Christ Jesus, or a measure of the Spirit of Truth; neither did I then know I should have taken heed thereunto, *as unto a Light shining in a dark place, untill the Day had more and more dawned; and until Christ the Day-Star had arisen in my Heart*, over all my Enemies; but my mind was still gazing abroad, and imagining a God afar off, and he was very nigh me, but I knew him not, but was hunting abroad in my Imaginations for that which was within me, the *Pearl of great Price was hid in my Heart*, but I knew it not, the *Kingdom of God was at hand*, but I was gazing for it abroad, whilst it (in measure) was working in my Heart, like *Leaven hid in three measures of Meal, &c.* the *Door into the Fold*, the *Entrance into Rest was within*, but I was seeking it abroad; my *Saviour was nigh*, but I imagined him *afar off*, and knew him not *nigh*; neither did any man in those dayes direct my mind *unto the Light and Gift of Christ in my own Heart*: And as for the Teachers of the People, even they in the highest Profession of God in words, were ready (they being so ignorant and unsensible of the Gift of God in themselves) to speak Blasphemy of the pure spiritual Light of Christ within (as many Professors do at this day, yet notwithstanding make a large Profession and Confession of Christ in Words, though in Works deny him) and to say, that which troubles a man for his sins is a temptation of *Sathan*, and thereby instead of directing the mind to the Light, draw away the mind more from the Light, and such are blind, and are under the wo,

that call Light Darkneſs, Good Evil, and are in that Spirit they were, who (though great Profeſſors) ſaid concerning Chriſt, *He is Mad, and hath a Devil, why hear ye him?* but as ſome then replyed, and ſaid, *Are theſe the works of him that hath a Devil? Can the Devil open the Eyes of the Blind?* ſo I may ſay, Is it the Devils work to diſcover Sin, and judge, condemn and trouble a man (in the unconverted ſtate) for Sin? or is it not his work to lull People a ſleep in Sin, and to cry peace to them in their Iniquities, and to keep them ſatisfied with a profeſſion of God without the poſſeſſion of a holy undefiled Life? Is it his work to deſtroy his own Kingdom, which is Sin? ſurely, no, that is only and alone the Work of Chriſt, *the Light of the World, made manifeſt within to deſtroy the Devil and his works*; he brings Trouble upon the Tranſgreſſor and miniſters Judgement againſt the Evil doer; he kindles a Fire in the earthly Heart, and raiſeth Trouble, Wars and great Tribulation within, before he be known to be the Prince of Peace, the Sabboth, the everlaſting Reſt for the Soul. And now I know infallibly that that which in thoſe dayes did bring trouble upon me for my Sins, and checked and judged for Evil, and begat good deſires in me after the Lord, was the pure Witneſs of God, the manifeſtation of his Spirit, the Light of his Son Chriſt Jeſus, a meaſure of his free Grace and Truth in my own Heart; and if ten Thouſand ſhould aſſert or affirm the contrary, I know their Teſtimony will be a Lye. But, oh, alas for me! after all this long Viſitation of the Love, Goodneſs and Mercy of the Lord to my Soul; and after all this trouble of Mind, travel of Spirit, deſiring and ſeeking after the Lord; I got, oh, I got into a falſe eaſe in the fleſhly Nature, and in a wrong liberty and falſe ſecurity, (as it is with many Profeſſors at this day, who once were low, broken and tender in Heart, mourning under the load and burden of of Sin, having ſincere deſires to ſerve God in holi-

neſs

neſs of Life, who are now gotten into the form and likeneſs of that they then hungred and thirſted after, and are therewith ſatisfied, and feeding themſelves with others Words, and without Knowledge, without Life, and ſo *are gotten at eaſe in the Pride, Faſhions and Vanity of the World, and are at liberty in the Fleſh*, counting it their Freedom *to do thoſe things that once was their Burden and Bondage*) and I became careleſs, and by diſobedience I quenched the ſtrivings of the Light of Chriſt in me, inſomuch as the Burden, Trouble and Sorrow which once lay heavy upon my Mind, I felt little of, although the Original and real cauſe which occaſioned the Burden, Sorrow and Trouble (which was my ſins) was not taken away, but augmented, and I through Rebellion had almoſt murdered the juſt and holy one in me, and had ſo grieved and wounded the Spirit of the Lord, that it had almoſt ceaſed ſtriving with me, though at ſometimes it would bring former things to my remembrance; and then ſome trouble and ſorrow would ſeize upon me for a time; but I ſoon got over it again, and turned from the Grace into Wantonneſs, and ſo forgot the Lord, whom I had formerly deſired and ſought after, and my Heart ran a whoreing after my old Lovers, with my Face turned back again to *Egypt* (the Land of Darkneſs, Wickedneſs, the Bondage-Houſe of Sin and Corruption) which before was partly turned towards *Canaan*, the Land of Light, Life and Reſt, and ſo ran into ſuch Evils as I had formerly been kept out of by a ſecret Power, which I then knew not, and I grew wanton, careleſs and wicked, and my Mind and Heart taken off ſeeking the Lord, and run into, and after the Vanity, Pleaſures and Idleneſs of the World, delighting much in Muſick and Dancing, Sporting and Gaming, and ſo made merry over the pure Witneſs of God, by ſinning and rebelling againſt it, and by rejecting its reproof and ſtrivings; Oh, oh, the patience and long-ſuffering of the Lord was large

towards me in that day, who long waited to be Gracious to my Soul Day after Day, Year after Year, who in his Juſtice might have cut me off in my Sins and Rebellion, and even have made me an Example of his Wrath; but oh, his mercy, his mercy and long-ſuffering was exceeding large to me, which by my Soul is not to be forgotten; but in and by the Spirit of Truth (which brings former things to my remembrance, and ſheweth things to come) am I to be kept in a living ſence and remembrance of the great mercy, long-patience, long-forbearance and long-ſuffering of the Lord God of Compaſſion towards me, and in the ſenſe thereof he is worthy to be praiſed and honoured by my Soul, who would not that I ſhould periſh from his preſence forever: For after all this the Lord, the tender God of tender bowels of compaſſion, was pleaſed to viſit my poor Soul again, even for his pure Seeds ſake, which he had not forgotten; but he remembred the Poor and Needy, the Captive exile, to deliver him out of the hand of him that was too ſtrong for him, and to looſe him, that he might not wholly die in the Pit, and periſh in the miery Clay; and Gods precious Truth, & pure Way of Righteouſneſs, and everlaſting Goſpel of Light, Life and Peace I heard preached and declared by his precious Servants (who were and are by ſcoffing *Iſhmael's* Brood, in ſcorn called *Quakers*, whom I now own in the Lord) and the pure Witneſs of God in my own Heart bore Teſtimony to the Truth declared by them; but long it was after I was in ſome meaſure convinced of the Truth, before I ſtedily gave up my Heart to obey the Truth; but the Lord in time did overcome my Heart by the Power of his Love, his inſpeakable Love, and made me willing to reſign up my Heart in obedience to him, and this Truth, and to bow down to the Yoak, and to take up the daily Croſs, which I learned by loving and taking heed to the Light, and to diſpiſe the Shame, and to follow the Lord in that way (*viz.* the

Light

Light which before had judged me for Sin, begat desires in me to know the Way) which I knew not while my mind was abroad, and knew not the Lord nigh, who now teacheth and guideth me by his Light and Spirit in the way of Truth and Righteousness, wherein I have found Peace, Rest and true satisfaction for my Soul, and witness my Teacher nigh, though it hath been my portion, with many other Brethren, sometimes to eat the Bread of Adversity, and to drink the Water of Affliction, yet my Teacher and Comforter can none remove from me; but he is and hath been with me in the Prison house, and in the low Dungeon; so that which now keeps me in Peace and Unity with the Lord, and in Fellowship with his People, the same thing (and not another) was it that did formerly check, reprove and judge me for Evil, and brought trouble upon me for my Sins, and that raised desires in me after the Lord, as I have explicated in the fore-going Lines, though I deny not but that I have now a greater measure of Light and Grace then I had then; yet the Light (in quality and nature) is the same; for although the Light or Seed of the Kingdom (which consisteth of Joy, Peace and Righteousness in the Holy Ghost) be in the unbeliever and unconverted, even as the least of all other Seeds, yet nevertheless, where or in whomsoever it be received in the Faith, Love and Obedience of it, in such it grows and increases until it become the greatest in them, and under its shadow they come to sit with great delight, and its Fruit becomes sweet to their taste; and as a little Leaven in three measures of Meal, it worketh and operateth in the Hearts and Minds of those that believe in the Light, until it hath wrought out the old leaven of Malice, Sin and Corruption, and leavened the Heart and Soul into its own nature, frame and quality; so the same Light which did condemn me for Sin when I was in disobedience to it, the same hath and doth save me from Sin,

and

and now juſtifies me as I am kept in the Faith and Obedience of it, and now it miniſters Peace and Reſt unto me, and before it miniſtred Trouble and Condemnation: So this I aſſert and affirm experimentally for an unerrable invincible Truth, (againſt all the Oppoſers, Gainſayers, Fighters and Undervaluers of the Light) *viz.* that the Light of Chriſt (who is the true Light that lighteth every one that cometh into the World) even in the Conſcience of that man or woman that is in Unbelief, and in the Unconverted State, is one in nature and quality with the Light in that man or woman that is in the belief of it, and converted by it; and the Light of Chriſt in the Conſcience of the Drunkard and Swearer, that doth check, judg and reprove him for his Sins, if it be believed in, loved and obeyed, is able to ſave him from his Sins; but that man or woman that loveth Evil and hateth the Light, and will not come to the Light, but reject it, ſuch do not feel nor witneſs the ſaving healing vertue, and reſtoring redeeming power of the Light, but is only unto them a Judg and Condemner; but they that receive it in the love and belief thereof, ſuch in, through and by the Light receive power to become the Sons of God, and joynt Heirs with Chriſt of the Kingdom of God which endures forever.

So bleſſed, bleſſed be the Lord my tender God, who is worthy, worthy to be praiſed, praiſed by my Soul in the ſence of his Love, Goodneſs and Grace, whoſe Mercy hath been, and is wonderful towards me, unto whom be honour, glory, praiſe, thankſgiving and obedience for evermore.

And my Soul having obtained mercy of the Lord, and having taſted of his Goodneſs and Graciouſneſs, and experienced his Tender Fatherly Dealings with and towards my Soul, my Heart is opened with Love and Good will to all People, Deſiring their Good and Eternal Welfare in God.

To

To thoſe that are young in Years, &c.

Minde thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth, before the Evil day come, &c. Eccleſ. 12. 1. &c.

AND you who are yet young and tender in Years, mind the Light of Chriſt in your Conſciences which checketh and reproveth for Evil, and idle words and works, and it will learn you (if you love it) to fear and mind the Creator in the daies of your Youth, before the Evil daies come, and the Years when ye ſhall ſay, *We have no pleaſure in them:* Oh ſay not any of you, *We are young, and have many Years yet to ſpend, wherefore we will take the pleaſure and delights of our Youth, and ſeek the Lord afterward, and Repent when we are old, &c.* But remember the Lord God your Maker giveth unto you Life, Breath and Being, and how ſoon he may cut the threed of your lives, and take you away from all your delights and vanities, you know not; for many he taketh away in their Youth: Wherefore trifle not away your precious time in Sin and Vanity, in vain Sports and Gamings, or any Wickedneſs, leſt your Hearts come to be hardened in Ungodlineſs, and you grow old in Iniquity, and when it is too late you diligently ſeek repentance, but you find it not; wherefore take warning, and mind thoſe things in time, before it be too late, that concern the eternal Peace, Reſt, and Happineſs of your immortal Soul, and firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God rather then the Riches, Glory and Honour of this World, which is all paſſing away, and will not help in the day of Calamity, and hour of Diſtreſs and Miſery which will overtake the Wicked, and all thoſe that forget

God,

God, as a Thief in the Night; therefore mind and fear the Lord your Maker, and take heed unto the Light in all your Conſciences, which is pure and holy, and hath no unity with any evil thought, word or work, and love and believe in the Light, that you may become Children of the Light; if you love the Light it will ſave you from your Sins, and redeem you from a vain Converſation, and learn you to take up a daily Croſs to your own Wills, Deſires, Luſts and Affections, and to Yoak down the vain, wild, wanton corrupt Nature, that defileth and polluteth your Hearts and Minds, Lives and Converſations; and ſo you will come to be changed and born again of the Seed incorruptible, of the Word of God which is nigh in the Heart to be obeyed and done; but if you delight in evil doing, and hate the Light of Chriſt in your own Conſciences, which judgeth you for Sin, and will not come to the Light, but live and abide in Darkneſs, and will not receive God's Counſel and Warnings, nor hearken unto his Reproofs, nor have none of his Ways, but will follow your own ways, wills and works, and fulfill the luſts and deſires of your own Hearts, and vain devices and imaginations of your own Minds, and will not that the Light ſhould rule over you, to govern you in the pure fear of the Lord, and to lead you into holineſs of Life, to guide you into the way of Truth and Righteouſneſs, then will the Light be your Condemnation, and leave you without excuſe when the Lord renders unto you according to your Works, and *the wages of Sin is Death, but the gift of God is Eternal Life through Jeſus Chriſt*: Therefore, dear People, love it and imbrace it whilſt it is near you, even knocking at the Door of your Hearts; oh, hearken to it, and let it have place in your Hearts, and refuſe not the Love and Mercy of the Lord tendered to you in the Light, nor harden not your Hearts againſt the eternal good, peace and happineſs of your own Souls, leſt the Day of your Viſitation

paſs

pass over, and the Night of everlasting Darkness, Sorrow, Misery and Calamity overtake you, and shut you up forever,

To all People that live and delight in wickedness.

The shew of their Countenance doth witness against them, they declare their Sin like Sodom, *and hide it not. Because I have called, and ye refused, &c. Ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would have none of my Reproof, &c. I will laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh, &c. Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and the Wicked, and they that do wickedly shall be as Stubble, &c. Now consider this all you that forget God, lest I tear you in Pieces, and there be none to deliver,* Isa. 3. 9. Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26. Mal. 4. 1. Psal. 50. 22.

AND you, oh People, that are void of the pure fear of the Lord God, and have given up your Hearts to work Wickedness with Greediness, who rush into Sin and Ungodliness, as the *Horse* rusheth into the Battle, and drinking up Iniquity, as the *Ox* drinketh in Water, taking pleasure in Unrighteousness, and delighting in Uncleanness, and wallowing in the Mire of your own Filthiness and Corruption, fulfilling the Lusts of your unclean Hearts, in Swearing, Lying, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Pride, Cozening, Defrauding, and such like Wickedness, whereby you grieve the Lord day after day, and wound, bruise, burden and oppress his righteous Spirit, as a Cart is oppressed with sheaves; oh repent, repent, and cease from the evil of

your doings, and leave off your wicked ways, leſt the Lord God tear you in Pieces, and there be none to deliver: Oh, tremble ye careleſs Ones before the Lord Almighty, who can conſume you in a Moment, and cut you off in the twinkling of an Eye; oh, dread the Lord God, and fear his great and dreadful Name, for the hour of his Judgment is come; oh, ſtand in awe of him who made the Heaven and the Earth, the Sea and Fountains of Waters; who giveth the Sun for a Light by Day, and the Ordinances of the Stars and Moon for a Light by Night, who divided the Sea when the Waves thereof did roar, who hath his way in the Whirlwind and in the Storm, and the Clouds are as the duſt of his Feet, who meeteth out the Heavens with a ſpan, and meaſureth the Waters of the Sea in the hollow of his Hand, he comprehendeth the Duſt of the Earth as in a Meaſure, and weigheth the Mountains as in Scales, and the Hills as in a Ballance, in compariſon of whom all Nations are but as a drop of the Bucket, and as the ſmall duſt of the Ballance. Oh, will you not fear the Lord, and dread his Majeſty, and tremble before his Preſence, who is a terrible one to the Workers of Iniquity that will not Repent; who cometh vvith Fire, and his Chariot, like a Whirlvvind, to render his Anger (againſt the Wicked and Ungodly) in Fury, and his Rebukes in flames of Fire; for by his Fire and by his Svvord vvill he cut dovvn the ſtrongeſt Oakes and talleſt Ceders, and vvill plead vvith all Fleſh, and the ſlain of the Lord ſhall be many; wherefore repent, repent, and tremble, tremble before the Lord God; ye Workers of Iniquity, for the day, the mighty, terrible, dreadful day of the Lord God Almighty is come, and yet a coming, and vvo, vvo to the Bryars and Thorns that cumber the Earth, for the day ſhall burn as an Oven, and the Wicked, and they that do vvickedly, and vvill not take vvarning and repent, (but ſtill harden their Hearts againſt the Lord, and againſt his precious Servants

that

that vvarn you to repent, vvhose Souls mourn and lament over you in the ſence of the Sadneſs, Wretchedneſs, Miſerableneſs and Deplorableneſs of your Conditions) ſhall be as Stubble, and the Day vvill burn them up both Root and Branch, and the Fire vvill burn up the Bryars and Thorns, and cleanſe the Earth, that Truth, Righteouſneſs, Juſtice and Mercy may ſpring and flouriſh therein, and the Mouth of Iniquity be ſtopt forever: And the day of the Lord God vvill be upon every one that is proud, and lifted up againſt the Lord and his anointed; and the loftineſs of the ſtouteſt in Heart againſt the Lord ſhall be laid low, and the haughtineſs of Men ſhall be humbled, and the Lord God (holy, juſt and true) ſhall be exalted in that day, when the Wicked ſhall flee to the Rocks, and hide themſelves as in the Caves of the Earth, for the fear of the Lord, and the Glory of his Majeſty, when he cometh to ſhake terribly the Earth, and to overthrow the Seat of Wickedneſs forever, and to puniſh the World for their Sins, and the Wicked for their Iniquity, and cauſe the Arroganey of the Proud to ceaſe, and to lay low the Haughtineſs of the Terrible: Wherefore, oh People, prepare, prepare by true Repentance, with ſpeed, to meet the Lord in the way of his Judgments, before his dreadful Fury break forth againſt you, as devouring Fire: Oh, bring forth Fruits worthy of Repentance and amendment of Life; oh, why will you die and periſh in your Iniquities forever? the Lord deſireth not the deſtruction of a Sinner, but rather he ſhould return in time, from his Wickedneſs, and learn Righteouſneſs and Live; yea, *Let the Wicked forſake his Wickedneſs, and the Ungodly man his Thoughts, and turn unto the Lord with his whole Heart, and he will have mercy upon him; for with the Lord there is great Mercy, and plentious Redemption*; who alſo *is juſt in all his Ways, and equal in all his Doings, and righteous in all his Judgments, and he will not be mocked by any, ſuch as People ſow*

ſuch muſt they reap, and the wages of Sin is Death. Oh, how many have been the Warnings of the Lord to the People of this Nation Time after Time, Year after Year, Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept? but how few have ponderouſly weighed them, received them, and laid them to Heart? and how hath the Lord in part executed his righteous Judgments in and upon this poor Nation? and how few have learned Righteouſneſs thereby? but the greateſt part of thy Inhabitants, oh *England*, are ſtill daily adding Sin unto Sin, and heaping of Iniquity upon Iniquity, and ſo fitting themſelves for a day of Slaughter: And inſtead of being truly humbled under the hand of God, and to mourn in Sack-cloath and Aſhes, many are ſporting themſelves in Muſick and Dancing, in ringing of Bells, Camping and Wreſtling, and many other Games and Vanities, as Bull-baiting and Bare-baiting, by which the Creatures are oppreſſed to make them Sport; alſo their wicked Stage-playes and Games, which are abomination to the Lord, and a ſhame to a Nation profeſſing Chriſtianity. O! how doth Swearing and Drunkenneſs abound, and many take pleaſure to overcome one another in the Sin of Drunkenneſs, which is abomination to the Lord. And you that are Tavern and Ale-Houſe-keepers, put not your Gueſts upon ſpending the good Creatures of God upon their Luſt, for your own Gain and Intereſt ſake; but rather reſtrain them, leſt you become guilty with them of their Sins, and ſo partake with them of their Plagues. And all your obſervable Days and Times, in which you take liberty to ſport your ſelves in Games and Vanity, ought to be left off, for your Cuſtoms are vain; you that obſerve a Time (as you pretend) in honour of Chriſt, which you ſpend in exceſs of Eating and Drinking, Muſick and Dancing, Gaming and Revelling; in theſe things you diſhonour Chriſt, and not honour him, but grieve his holy Spirit, and add Sin unto Sin; and the greater will

will be the condemnation of such, except they Repent; and truly, a great and sore Plague is come upon many People, even hardness, hardness of Heart: So that indeed, neither the Warnings nor Weings, Mercies nor Judgments of the Lord will take impression on them, to move them to Repentance; and in the sence of this my Heart is grieved, and my Soul mourneth in secret because of the hardness of their Hearts, which doth signifie them to be as Vessels of wrath fitted for Destruction. Oh, how doth all manner of Wickedness abound, and Ungodliness appear with open Face, and blush not at rebuke? oh, how doth Pride super-abound, and Peoples Hearts so puffed up therewith, that many scarce know what to eat, drink or put on? oh, the Fields are even white for the Harvest, Sinners grown ripe for Vengance, Iniquity is coming to its full height, the Vats overflow with Wickedness; oh, how are the Proud counted happy, and the Workers of Iniquity set up? but the Meek of the Earth are despised, and the humble and contrite Ones are killed all the day long, and counted as Sheep for the Slaughter, and they that reprove Sin in the Gate are Hated and Persecuted, and he that departeth from Iniquity, and learns Righteousness, maketh himself a Prey: Oh, the Lord hath seen it, and it displeaseth and grieveth him, because of the multitudes of the Transgressions and Abominations of the Sons of men, and Violence and Cruelty that filleth the Earth; but the Lord will arise as a man of War, and ease himself of his Enemies, and avenge himself of his Adversaries; for because Judgment is not speedily executed against an Evil work, therefore the Hearts of the Sons and Daughters of men are set in them to do wickedly; but what will be the end thereof?

Oh *England*, oh *England*, how often would the Lord in mercy have gathered thy Inhabitants unto himself, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but thou wouldest not?

not? therefore hath the Lord in Judgment partly made thee desolate: Oh, thy great City, thy great City, whose Abominations reached Heaven, and her Sins came up before the Most High; how hath the Lord God (mighty in Power, and righteous in Judgment) layed her Glory in the Dust, covered her Dignity with Ashes, and mate'd her Beauty with Burning! Oh, how hath he made of a City an Heap; of a defenced City, a Ruin; of a Palace of Strangers, to become a ruinous Heap! And oh, how few of thy Inhabitants, oh *England*, have weightily laid it to Heart, or have seriously and diligently taken notice of the cause of the Destruction thereof: the Lord could have destroyed the People with their Habitations; but the Lord in Mercy spared them, that his Mercy might move them to Repentance! Oh, *England*, how hath Judgment after Judgment been executed upon thine Inhabitants? how hath the Lord visited thee with Plague, Fire and Sword, yet their Hearts are still stout against the Lord and his People; their minds haughty, and they will not bow their Hearts to the Lord, nor break off from their evil doings, and wicked wayes; therefore is his Hand stretched forth still, and they that will not take Warning and Repent, must feel his heavy stroke. Oh, say not any of you in your Hearts, *Tush, the Lord hath done his worst*? oh, the Lord he hath begun, and he can make a full end, and who amongst you can stay his Hand, or escape his stroke when he smites? or where can you hide your selves from the Lord? therefore bow, fear and tremble before him, and submit your selves, and meet him by True and Unfeigned Repentance, and that is the way for you to escape the Stroke of his Fury.

The Lord is a God full of long-suffering, and full of patience and forbearance; and long waeth Sinners, and waiteth day after day to be Gracious, even to the Rebellious; but his

patient

patient forbearing will come to an end, towards those that will by no means repent and be reclaimed from the evil of their wayes, and against such his Anger and Wrath will break forth as Fire, and they like Stubble, ready dry, will be consumed therein: Therefore you that have not yet wholy sinned out the day of your Visitation, prize, prize that little time you have, and make good use thereof, in diligently minding and seeking, after those things that concern your eternal Peace, before you go hence and be no more. Oh! dear People, everywhere, my love is to you, and pity and tender compassion is in my Heart for you, and your good and welfare eternally I desire, especially you, unto whom I am known in the Flesh even you my Neighbours and Countrymen, whose resident is in *Kirtly, Peakfield, Lapestouf*, and those parts: Oh, my Soul tenders your eternal happiness, and desires the Salvation of your Souls, yea, love and good will is in my Heart towards you, and to all People; oh, that you your selves did tender, and seek after the Salvation of your Souls more then you do: Remember when sometimes you have been in great jopardy of your Lives at Sea, and the Lord hath in Mercy delivered you, how little have some of you Eyed the Mercy and delivering Hand of the Lord therein? but have been ready to ascribe the honour of your deliverance to the Anchor, Cable and Man-hood, *&c.* More then to the Lord; and when you have been in great danger of your Lives; and saw no way but you must perish; have you not then cryed to the Lord to deliver you (and the Guilt of your Iniquities being hung upon your Consciences) have you not been ready to make Promises, in your distress, to the Lord, that if he spared your Lives you would repent; and return unto him, and fear and serve him, and forsake the Evil wayes; and when the Lord hath answered your desires, and in mercy hath given you your Lives for a Prey, when you came to Land, have

you

you then performed your Vows and Promises to the Lord, or have you not gone on in Sin and Evil still? let Gods witness in every Conscience speak; for unto that I make my appeal: Consider seriously how it stands between God and your own Souls, and how greatly it concerneth you. Sea-men (and so it doth all other People) to mind their latter end, and to be ready for sudden death; it is a blessed thing to be fit to dye, and to feel peace with God. Dear People, your Souls are immortal, and must hereafter be in a sence and feeling of Joy, Peace and Rest; or else of Sorrow, Misery and Torment, even to all Eternity; wherefore it concerns every particular one, to mind above all other things, and seek after the eternal peace and happiness of your Souls in time, before it be too late; it is Sin, Wickedness, Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart, that doth separate People from the Lord, and that draws down the wrath and curse of God upon them; wherefore people must first be separated and cleansed from that (to wit, Sin) which separates them from the Lord, and from his Love, Peace and Blessing, before they can witness their Reconciliation unto God in his Son, and enjoy his Love, Peace and Blessings. Oh, dear People, I beseech you, do not deceive your own Souls, by being satisfied with a talk of being saved and redeemed by Christ, &c, whilst you remain in your Sins, for whom Christ saves he saveth from their Sins, not in their Sins; and they that witness Christ to be their Redeemer, are redeemed from a vain Conversation, and have their Consciences purged from dead works, and their Hearts cleansed and washed in his Blood (which is his Life and Light) from Sin and Corruption, that so they might serve him in newness and holiness of Life: Therefore consider, be still, serious and ponderous in Heart, and retire your minds inward to the pure Light of Christ in your own Consciences, that true and faithful Witness of God, which

keeps

keeps a Record of the deeds done in the Body, and according to his Record muſt every man be judged according to his works, ſo take heed unto the Light, & it will ſhew you your conditions, and how it ſtands with your poor Souls to Godward; that will deal plainly with you, & will not deceive you; though indeed, your Teachers (who preach for Hire, & divine for Money) have, & do deceive you, by crying Peace to you, & lulled you aſleep in your Sins, & have (as it were) daubed you up with untempred Morter, and (as it were) ſewing Pillows under your Arm-holes, ſo long as you put into their Mouthes, & give them hire, & help to maintain their God, which is their Belly: But wo to ſuch Teachers that feed with the Fat, and clothe with the Wool; and for filthy Lucre and Gain from their Quarters will cry peace unto the Wicked, unto whom (while they remain in their wicked ſtate) *there is no true peace, ſaith the Living God*; oh, they are Blind Leaders of the Blind, and how many are fain into the Pit of Perdition, that have been led by them? Therefore, dear People, ceaſe from your Teachers, who have not profitted you at all, but keep you ever learning, but never able to bring you to the knowledg of the Truth, which until you do come to know freedom from the bondage of Sin and Corruption, you cannot witneſs; therefore to the Light in all your Conſciences come, for that is Truth, and love it, and obey it, and you will by it receive power over Sin, and be enabled to caſt off the Yoak of Iniquity, and to take up the Yoak of Chriſt, and embrace that Croſs which crucifies to the World, and worldly things unto the Luſt and Wickedneſs thereof, and ſuch are true Diſciples of Jeſus that learn of him who is meek and low in their Hearts, and that do deny themſelves, and take up the daily Croſs to their own Wills, Thoughts, Words, Works, Deſires and Affections, and follow him through many Tribulations, in the narrow way of Holineſs; for it is not he that calls Lord, Lord, but

he that doth the Will of God that inheriteth the Kingdom of God; not the Sayers, or Knowers of the Will of God are juſtified but the Doers of the Will are juſtified; not they that only confeſs (with the Mouth, day after day, that they are miſerable Sinners, *&c.* (as both Prieſt and People do) and yet ſtill Year after Year remain the ſame, if not grow worſe) ſhall find mercy; but they that (not only confeſs) but forſake, and turn from the evil (in Heart Life and Converſation) unto that which is good, ſhall find mercy and forgiveneſs, and remiſſion of Sins. Oh, mind the good thing in you which is grieved and burdened with the evil, and turn in your minds to it, and it will let you ſee thoſe things that are reproveable: Drunkard turn in thy mind to the Light in thy own Conſcience, and it will ſhew thee, judge and reprove thee for thy Drunkenneſs; Swearer turn into the Light, and it will judge thee for Swearing, for Lying, Pride, Envy, Malice, Reviling, Cheating, Defrauding, Covetouſneſs, Fornication; yea, *All things that are reprovable are made manifeſt by the Light, and that which maketh manifeſt is Light*; thou that hateſt the Light, and loveſt thy Evil deeds, and wilt not come to the Light, becauſe it will reprove thee, there thou haſt learned thy condemnation; *For this is the condemnation of the World, that Light is come into the World, and men love Darkneſs rather then the Light, becauſe their deeds are evil; but they that do good love the Light, and bring their deeds to the Light, to try them whether they be wrought in God*; and ſuch are juſtified by the Light: *So while you have the Light, believe in the Light, that you may become Children of the Light*; ſo unto the Light (in all your Conſciences) I am made manifeſt, and in true unfained love, and bowels of pity, tenderneſs and compaſſion to your immortal Souls have I cleared my Conſcience, in giving you warning to Repent and turn from the evil of your own ways unto the Lord, while you have a time, before

the

the door of Mercy be ſhut againſt you forever, and time unto you be no more.

From one that tenders the Eternal happineſs and good of your Immortal Souls, a Sufferer in Bonds for the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience

William Bennit

To thoſe that are ſeeking the Living God in the Dead Forms.

Having a Form of godlineſs but deny the Power thereof, from ſuch turn away, &c. Why ſeek ye the Living among the Dead? he is not here, but is riſen, &c. Know you not your ſelves, how that Chriſt Jeſus is in you, except you be Reprobates, 2 Tim. 3. 5. Luke 14. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

AND all dear People that are ſcatered among the many Sects and Heaps, who have honeſt ſincere deſires and thirſtings after the Lord; oh, love and compaſſion is in my Heart towards you, and my Soul pities you; and the more, becauſe you are ſeeking the Living God among the Dead Forms, Shadows, Carnal Ordinances, Beggerly (in compariſon of the Life of Truth) Elements and Rudiments of the World, but cannot there find true laſting peace, reſt, comfort and ſatisfaction for the immortal Souls: Oh, Chriſt is riſen he is not there, his Appearance is now more hidden, more inviſible, more inward; therefore ſtay not in Shadows, reſt not in the Likeneſs without Life; pitch not your Tent in the Form, without the Power; Come, come away, you thirſty Ones, from the Wells of man's digging, which can hold no Water,

that will rightly and kindly satisfie your thirsty Souls, and wait to know the Spring opened in your own Hearts, which cometh from Christ, the Fountain of living Water, and drink thereof, and be satisfied, and go no more forth to the broken Cisterns; but wait within, in the Light, for the Springs of Life to refresh your thirsty Souls.

Oh! come out of the Shadows to the Substance, *Christ* (the Light) *in you, except you be Reprobates:* Oh! the Spirit and the Bride says, *Come*; and he that drinketh says, *Come*; and let him that is a thirst come, and drink of the Water of Life freely; why do you spend your Time for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which doth not truly satisfie your Souls? Oh! feed no longer upon the Husk, upon Words without Life, upon Knowledge without Power; for that will puff you up in your own Eyes, and elevate you in your own Conceits, and shut you out from the Tree of Life; and though you may seem to grow Rich and increase with Goods, and want nothing; yet when your Eyes come to be opened, you will see your selves Poor, Blind and Naked; for he that covereth himself with a Covering of Words and Knowledg, and a Profession without Life, his Covering is not the Fine Linnen, white and clean, which the Wise Virgins that follow the Lamb are cloathed with, who have Oyl in their Vessels, the Light, Life and Substance in themselves; but they that only get Words and Knowledge into the Comprehension, and grow rich in the Brain, and have their Religion in their Head, and know not the pure undefiled Religion in the Heart, such are Foolish Virgins, that have Oyl only in their Lamps; and though such may blaze, and give a seeming great Light in Words, yet such one day will want Oyl, and their Lights will go out; the Lord will dry up all standing Waters that have no Spring; he will blast all Professions out of the Light, all Gatherings out of the Name

and

and Power of God, the Lord will ſcatter; therefore come away (from among them) you Unſatisfied and Thirſty Ones, whoſe Souls pant after the Lord, and are weary of the Husks, and hunger after the Subſtance: And deceive not your own Souls by creating to your ſelves a falſe Peace, by applying the Promiſes to your ſelves, and acting Faith (as you ſay) upon a Promiſe; but ſeriouſly conſider in the Fear of the Lord, and examine your own Hearts, with the Light of Chriſt in your own Conſciences, whether you be in that State and Condition that the Promiſes of Life Eternal are unto, yea or nay: There is great Difference between man's applying the Promiſes, forcing him to believe they belong to him; and God's applying them, and ſealing them to the Soul by his own Spirit: The Promiſes of God are Yea and Amen in Chriſt Jeſus, the Covenant of Light and Life; and thoſe that are converted into him, pertake with him of the Promiſes of Life eternal; but he that is in Chriſt, is a New Creature, the old things are paſſed away, and all things become new; and ſuch walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit, and ſo come to be Heirs with Chriſt of that Kingdom that is without End. But for any to ſet themſelves to believe, that they are elected in Chriſt Jeſus unto Life eternal, and ſo count the Promiſes of God are theirs, when they are not become New Creatures in Chriſt, but are in their Sin, ſuch deceive their own Souls; for *Unleſs a man* (ſaid Chriſt) *be born again, he cannot enter into God's Kingdom.* So all you hungry Souls, turn in your Minds to the Light of Chriſt Jeſus in your Conſciences, and wait in it, to know Bread in your own Houſes, Chriſt in you, the Bread of Life, which the living Soul feeds on, and lives by, that you may know the freſh and green Paſture, and with us feed therein, and drink of the ſtill Waters, and reſt with us (in the Light) in the Fold; that ſo we may all know and have one Shepherd, and be all of one Sheepfold.

To

To thoſe that are backſlided from the Truth.

Remember therefore from whence thou art faln, and Repent, and do thy firſt works, &c. *Return, oh, backſliding* Iſrael, &c. *I will heal thy backſliding*, &c. *But if you will not hear, my Soul ſhall weep in ſecret*, &c. *Becauſe the Lord's Flock is gone into Captivity*, Rev. 2. 5. Jer. 3. 12. Hoſea 14. 4. Jer 14. 17.

AND you who have taſted of the Power of an Endleſs Life, and were convinced of the precious immutable Truth of God, and had in meaſure received it in the love and obedience of it, and by it were in part ſet free from the bondage of Sin and Corruption, and redeemed out of the pollutions of the World, but now are Apoſtatized from the Lord, and have forſaken his precious Truth and People, and like *Demas* embraced this preſent World again, and are turned like the Dog to his Vomit, and like the Swine that were waſhed, to wallow in the Mire again, and have made ſhip-wrack of Faith and a good Conſcience, and have proved treacherous both to God and his People, and have denyed the Womb that bore you, and the Breſt that gave you ſuck, and have turned from the Grace of God into wantonneſs, and done diſpite to the Spirit of Truth, and hath trampled the Blood of the Covenant (wherewith you were in meaſure ſanctified) under your Feet as an unholy thing, and have ſlain the Juſt, and crucified the Righteous in your ſelves. Oh, poor, poor Hearts! my Soul pities you, and mourns in ſecret over you, and cannot but lament the ſadneſs and deplorableneſs of your Conditions; oh, better you had never known the Truth, then after you have known it to turn from it to your old Lovers

Lovers again: Oh, whither will you go you Backſliding ones? where, and in what will you hide your ſelves from the Lord, now you are departed from him? if you go from Sea to Sea, he will find you out; and what can defend you from his wrath? oh, where and in what can you find true Peace, Reſt and happineſs for your Souls, ſeeing you have forſaken him in whom alone it is to be enjoyed? Oh, are you not ſenſible that you want true Peace? Oh, you that have forſaken the Father's Houſe of plenty, and are gone out among the Swine who feed upon the Husks; oh, poor Hearts! do you not ſometimes a little come to your ſelves, and then remember the Father's Houſe? and do you not then find ſome inclination and deſire to return again? if you do return, how know you but that he will have compaſſion on you, and receive you into his Houſe again? though you have been ſpending your Portion among Harlots, and have deal ſo treacherouſly by him, and ſo much wounded and grieved him, and his Children; yet notwithſtanding if you can throughly return unto him with your whole Hearts, he can and will receive you, and heal your Backſlidings, & blot out your Sins, & forgive you your Tranſgreſſions againſt him, and love you freely. Therefore return, return you backſliding Ones, why, why will you die and periſh forever; oh, repent and do the firſt Works, turn your minds inward to the pure and juſt One in your ſelves, which you have grieved, wounded and oppreſſed, as a Cart is oppreſſed with Sheaves: Oh that you might look upon him whom you have pierced, and behold him whom you have wounded, and even mourn and lament over him: Oh, to the pure, holy, faithful Witneſs of God in your own Conſciences, which you were at firſt turned unto you muſt come, and the righteous Judgment of the Lord you muſt own, and wait in; yea, a dreadful Cup you muſt drink before you can enjoy true laſting peace in God: Oh that you could be willing

to

to drink it, and to pass again through the Fire and Sword, yea, through Death, to come to eat again of the Tree of Life, and live forever: Oh, that all you that are betrayed (like *Sampson*) of their strength by the Adulterous mind, so as that the *Philistine*, the uncircumcised Nature hath prevailed over you, and put out your Eyes, that you are become Blind, and cannot see that beauty and comeliness in the Lord and his Truth which you once saw; oh that the Lord would be pleased to visit you again, that (like as the Hair of *Sampson* grew again, his strength increased; so that he slew more of his Enemies at his Death, then he did in all his Life) so the Seed of God may be raised again in your Hearts, and the strength therein and thereby may be renewed and grow, that by your dying again unto that which is contrary to the Will of God, you may witness greater Victory in the Lord over your Enemies, and know more of them slain then ever you did. Oh! you that find and are sensible that the Lord hath not wholly given you over, but is yet striving with you by his pure Witness in you to return unto him, his Truth and People again; Oh! return before it be too late, and before the Door of Mercy be forever shut against you; for then, if you seek the Blessing with Tears, as *Esau* did, you will not obtain it; and though you call, *Lord, Lord open unto us, we have Eaten and Drunk in thy Presence, and in thy Name we have cast out Devils, and have had power over unclean Spirits, and have done many great Works*; yet notwithstanding he will say, *Depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity, I know you not*: Therefore be sober and serious, and ponderously consider, and let these things take deep Impression in your Hearts, which are wrote in true Love, Pity and Bowels of Compassion to your Immortal Souls, by a Mourner over you, and a Travailer in Spirit for your Restoration.

To

To those that profess the Truth, yet walk contrary to the Truth in Life and Conversation.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now I tell you weeping, that they are Enemies to the Cross of Christ, &c. Phil. 3. 18, 19.

AND all you who make a Profession of the Light and Truth in Words, but in Works deny it, whose Conversations are loose and vain, and not consistant with your Profession, nor answerable, but repugnant to Truth, you do not conduce to the honour of Truth, but produce a dishonour thereunto by your loose disorderly walking, whereby you also give the Enemies of Truth advantage against the Truth for them to reproach the Truth, and those that walk and live in the Truth, and also you are a stumbling Block in the way of the simple-hearted, that hath a Love and Desire towards Truth, and a Grief and Burden to the Faithful that love the Truth, and live in it, and seek the Glory and Honour thereof; and also you deceive your own Souls, by being satisfied with a Profession of Truth, without the possession thereof; and you have no true peace where you are, nor unity with the Lord, nor fellowship with his People; for the unity and fellowship of the Saints is in the Light and holy Life of God; and they that are out of the Light (though they profess it) are out of the unity of Faith, and fellowship of the Sons of God, and such are but gotten into the outward Court where the *Gentiles*, the uncircumcised in Heart can come; but blessed are all they that do the Will of God, and keep his Commandments, and have right to the Tree of Life, and enter through the Gate

into the City, where no unclean thing can come: So all you that profess the Truth, and walk contrary to the Truth, come to be faithful and obedient to the Truth, that in the Way of Truth and Righteousness you may walk as becometh Truth; and that in the Light you may shine as Lights in your holy Lives and blameless unspotted Conversations, to the praise and glory of God, and to the peace, rest, comfort and happiness of your own Souls: verily no Hypocrite in *Sion* can be hid from the Lord, who giveth the Churches to know that it is he that searcheth the Heart and tryeth the Reins, who saith, *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every one according as his work shall be.*

To all those that are Convinced of the Truth but still remain in the World's Ways.

If you know these things, happy are you if you do them: He that knoweth the Father's Will, and doth it not, is worthy of many stripes, John 13. 17.

AND all you that are convinced of the Truth & Way of God, but do not resign up your Hearts in obedience to walk therein, but still remain in the broad way of the World, partaking with them of their Sins, Idolatry and false Worship, and though you see the Vanity and Evil thereof, yet (for by-ends and carnal self-interests, to save your selves from Reproach and Suffering) you joyn with them therein against the pure Witness of God in your own Consciences; and if you continue partaking with them of their Sins, how can you but expect also to partake of their Plagues, except you haste out from among them, and embrace and receive

ceive the Truth in the Love and Obedience of it? Oh! come out, come out from amongſt them, and be you ſeparated, and touch no more the Unclean Thing, that the Lord may receive you unto himſelf, and become your God, and you become his People. Oh! you that know the Fathers Will, and do it not, are you not worthy of many Stripes? Oh, poor Hearts! ſhun not the Croſs any longer, neither be aſhamed of the Reproach, nor aſhamed of the Lord and his People before Men; but give up your Hearts to obey the Lord and his precious Truth, and take up the daily Croſs, that crucifies unto the World and Worldly Things, unto the Sin, Wickedneſs, Formal Worſhips, Vain Cuſtoms, Ceremonies, Pride and Vanity thereof, and follow the Lamb in the narrow Way of Holineſs; and be willing to Suffer with Chriſt, and you ſhall Reign with him; and love not your Lives unto Death, and you ſhall have a Crown of Life. Oh! how long hath the Lord been woing many of you day after day, if not year after year, and hath long waited (knocking at the Door of your Hearts) in his Grace to be Gracious unto you, who deſireth not that you ſhould periſh in your Rebellion and Diſobedience? Oh! that the ſenſe of his Goodneſs, Mercy and Patient forbearing towards you might overcome your Hearts, and make you willing to reſign up your ſelves to walk in the Way of Truth, before the Lord ceaſe ſtriving with you (who hath ſaid, *His Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with Man*) leſt the Day of your Viſitation paſs over your Heads. Therefore come forward you that halt and linger behind in the Borders of *Babylon*, and Subburbs of *Egypt*; and come nigh you that ſtand afar off gazing to ſee what will become of us; *He that is not with me* (ſaid Chriſt) *is againſt me*; *he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth abroad*; *none can ſerve* (two Maſters) *God and Mammon*.

To those that are Newly Convinced of the Truth.

Ye were like Sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls: He shall gather his Lambs in his Arms, and carry them in his Bosom, 1 Peter 2. 25. Isaiah 40 11.

AND all you who are newly convinced of the precious Truth and Way of God, and have in measure received Truth in the love and belief of it, and have and daily do give up your hearts to obey the Truth, and to walk in the Way of Righteousness, and Path of Holiness: Dear Ones, unto you my Heart is open in the tender Bowels of my heavenly Fathers Love; and happy and blessed of the Lord God are you, if you do not faint, nor grow weary in your Minds, nor turn back again, as some have done, but persevere on to the End. Oh! dear Babes, whom the Lord, mighty in Power, hath by his out stretched Arm brought out of *Egypt*, the Land of Darkness and House of Bondage, and hath set your Faces towards *Canaan*, the good Land of Liberty, Light, Rest and Peace: Oh, travail on, travail on ye weak Ones in the strength of the Lord, and drawings of his Light, and look not back to *Egypt* again, remember *Lot*'s Wife; and fear not (the God of the World, the Prince of the Power of the airy mind, even that wicked Spirit that once had dominion in and over you, and kept you Bond-slaves in darkness to Sin and Corruption) though he (the Enemy of your Souls, Liberty, Peace and Rest) may pursue hard after you with his whole Host of Temptations, Snares and Allurements, both inward and outward,

outward; and alſo a Sea of Troubles, Straits, Difficulties and Sufferings may appear in your Way, both within and without, and Mountains of Fears, Doubts and carnal Reaſonings on every ſide, and alſo ſomething in you ready to murmur, complain and ſay, *Oh! that we had tarried ſtill in* Egypt, *and not ſet one ſtep towards* Canaan; *for the Way is ſo ſtrait, and the Path ſo narrow, the Sufferings ſo hard, and the Difficulties and Dangers ſo great and various, that we fear we ſhall periſh by the way, and not get to our deſired Reſt; therefore let us turn back again, before we go any further.* Oh! fear not, neither turn back, but ſtand ſtill from reaſoning carnally, and look not at the Straits, Tryals, Dangers, Sufferings and Loſſes that may appear before you; neither look at your own VVeakneſs, Feebleneſs and Inability, nor at the Strength and Temptation of your Enemy; but look up (ye little ones) unto the Lord, and truſt you in the Strength of his Arm, for he is God all-ſufficient for you; therefore caſt your care upon him, and he will make a VVay for you through the Sea, and divide the VVaters of the great Deep, and make a VVay for you in the VVilderneſs, and a Path through the Thickets, and make the Crooked Strait before you, and the Rough Smooth; he will throw down the Mountains, and remove away the Hills, and lead you in a VVay you know not, and in a Path you never before trod in, and will make the hard things eaſie unto the VVilling and Obedient, that turn not back again to their old Lovers, but love Truth and Righteouſneſs, and follow on to know the Lord in his VVay; all ſuch he will give to drink of the Brook by the VVay, and feed with Bread from Heaven, whereby you ſhall be refreſhed, and your Strength renewed daily, in which Strength you ſhall be able to travail on without fainting, and to run and not be weary, until you come to your deſired Reſt, and ſee the Travail of your Souls, and be ſatisfied with the Enjoyment of that you have travailed after.

after. So the Lord be with you and keep your Eye single unto himself, that your Hearts may be full of Light, that nothing may cause you to stumble and fall into the Snares of the Enemy, who hath hindred many that once begun to run well; oh! mind and keep to that in your own Hearts which makes you truly sensible of your particular States and Conditions, and in that sense daily wait upon the Lord diligently and patiently for the sweet Refreshings from his Presence, and for the distillings of his Heavenly Dew, that so the tender Plants of Righteousness and Lilly of Holiness may grow and spring in all your Hearts; that the little Seed of Life may become as a great Tree, and every one of you may witness a sitting under your own Vine (Christ in you the Hope of Glory) and none to make you afraid.

And dear Friends, look not out at others, but keep at home in the Light, the Tent; Jacob *shall dwell alone, and not be numbred among the Nations*; *Esau* he hunts abroad, and grows weary and faint, and then sells his Birthright for a Mess of Pottage: What if some stumble, and fall from the Truth? let not that shake you; Truth is the same still, and changeth not; and if you see some turn aside from us into a Self separation from the Body of Friends, and endeavour to draw Disciples after them, let not that cause you to stumble and question the Certainty of Truth; neither be you drawn away and tost about like Children by them; but keep to the Light, and in it follow the Foot-steps of the Flock; but follow not the Foot-steps of the Wandering Sheep, that have left their Flock and are gone astray, who are like to perish by the devouring Beast and Enemy of their Souls, except in time they return again to the Fold: And if you see some (amongst our selves) setting or keeping up that thing or practice which is out of the comly decent Order of the Body, and not consistant with Truth's Government, let not that beget an Occa-

sion

ſion of ſtumbling in your Minds; but be ſtill, and keep your Eye ſingle to the Lord, and walk as you have them for an Example (that are over you in the Lord) who fully follow Chriſt Jeſus: And as for that which is only ſet up and held up by Man, out of Truth's Order, it will die and paſs away, and Truth will out-live all.

So unto the Lord, who hath called you out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light, do I commit you to be preſerved unto himſelf unto the End; *For, many are called, but few choſen; he that abides to the End, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.*

To the true Mourner in *Sion*,

To appoint to them that mourn in Sion, *and to give them the Oyl of Joy for Mourning*, &c. *Bleſſed are you that mourn, for you ſhall be comforted. They that ſow in Tears ſhall reap in Joy*, &c. Iſaiah 61. 3. Matth. 5. 4. Pſal. 126. 5, 6.

OH, lift up thy head thou bowed down, thou Mourner in *Sion*, who art as one alone in a ſolitary place, and few ſeeth thee, or knoweth thy Sorrow, or truly ſenſible of thy Grief, or behold thy Tears, who art (in thine own Eye) as a Woman forſaken and grieved in Spirit; as a Wife of Youth rejected, who appears in thy own Eyes as it were Miſerable and Wretched, mourning in the ſence of thy own (as thou thinkeſt) Unworthineſs, Failings, Inability, Emptineſs and Poverty, who art ready to ſay (with ſorrow) Where is there any ſo Poor, Empty, Barren and Unfruitful to God as I? Oh, I can do nothing for the Lord except (like *Mary*) Weep behind him (thinking my ſelf ſcarce worthy to ſee his Face) and waſh his Feet with my Tears, whilſt

whilst others sit at the Table with him, and eat of the Fatness of his House, and drink of the New-wine of his Kingdom; but alas for me! my Tears are my Meat and Drink, because of the oppression of my Enemy, who saith to my Soul, Where is thy God? dost thou think thou shalt ever be worthy to behold his Face, to receive his Love, and to have the Smiles of his Countenance? And thou (O mourning one) by hearkening to, and believing thy Enemy, becometh (in thy own eye) like an alone Sparrow upon the House-top; and as the alone Quail in the Stubble-field; and as a Dove alone, mourning for the loss of her Mate; and so thou layest thee down in Sorrow, and makest it thy Bed, and Grief thy Sheets, Tears thy Pillow, and Sighing and Mourning thy Sleep, whilst thou believest thy Enemy, and entertainest those Fears, Doubtings and Carnal Reasonings (which he infuseth into thy Heart) as thy Companion: But arise I say unto thee (in the Name of my God, and thy God, of my Father, and thy Father) arise out of thy Bed, for thy Beloved is at hand, and knocketh at the door of thy Heart; arise out of thy Bed of Sorrow, Fears and Doubtings, and by Faith let him in whom thy Soul loveth; say not, I am not worthy of him, but rather say, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief, strengthen my Faith, make me more worthy of thee*: Oh, shut him out no longer by unbelief and doubtings, and by reasoning with and hearkening unto the Enemy of thy Souls Joy, Peace and Comfort, who would always keep thee from thy Beloved, and would daily add Sorrow to thy Sorrow, and Affliction to thy Grief, and Weight to thy Burden, that he might (if he could) wholly sink thee down into the Pit of Desparation forever: Wherefore hearken no longer unto him, for he was a Lyar from the beginning; entertain him not, nor his false Instigations any longer (nor by unbelief keep not him out any longer whom thou lovest and much

desirest)

desireſt) but by that ſmall meaſure of Faith thou ſometimes feel'ſt in God, though it be but as a Grain of Muſtard ſeed, endeavour to thruſt and keep out the Enemy, and to remove the Mountains of Fears and Doubtings out of the way, and by Faith embrace him whom thy Soul desires more then Rubies or much fine Gold; that ſo the Nights of thy Sorrow and Mourning for him in thy Bed of Fears and Doubtings may be turned into ſweet repoſes with him in his Bed of Solace; that thou mayſt ſay with gladneſs of heart, the Falſe Accuſer is caſt out, and my Beloved is come, is come, and his reward is with him; he hath taken me from my mourning ſtate into his Banqueting-houſe of Joy, Peace, Reſt and true Satisfaction, and his Banner over me is Love; and now my Sorrow is turned into Joy; and I that once ſate mourning in the Pit of doubtings and unbelief, hath the Lord (upon the wings of Faith) raiſed up to come to ſing in the hight of *Sion*, and to flow to the goodneſs of my God, who hath exalted my Horn in him, and enlarged my Mouth over my Enemy, whoſe Mouth was enlarged over me in the day I bowed under him through unbelief and doubtings: Oh, then feebleneſs poſſeſſed my Loins, weakneſs my Knees, and faintneſs my Heart; ſo that when I roſe up to go (towards my Beloved) I fell by doubtings and fears; but now, I that ſtumbled, am (by Faith in the Power of my God) girt with Strength, and the Bow of the mighty man (that prevailed againſt me broken in pieces, who ſo often wounded me with his Darts, that I was like to poor *Lazarus*, full of *Wounds*, *Bruiſes* and *Sores*; but the Great *Phyſician of Souls* hath healed me with the Oyl of Faith and Salvation; and now I find that it is the Lord that bindeth up the broken in heart, & healeth all their wounds; Oh, bleſſed be the Lord who hath exalted my low Eſtate, and brought me from off the Dunghil, and given me a Manſion in the Father's Houſe, and a place at the Table

with his Children; though I once, by hearken to my Enemy, ſaid, I was a Dog, and not worthy to eat of the Childrens Bread; and ſo I kept good things from me by yeilding to my Adverſary, who would ſtill have feed me with his food, even the duſt of the Earth, that ſo I might have continued always Weak, Lean, Barren and Feeble, and never to have been able to overcome him; but the Lord my tender God (who thought upon me in the day of my diſtreſs, when I was poor and needy) hath rebuked him, and hath put him under my Feet, the mighty the Lord hath brought down from his Seat, and exalted him of low degree, he hath delivered *Jacob* out of the hand of him that was too ſtrong for him, and though he was a Worm, and no Man, and the cry was, *How ſhall Jacob ariſe?* yet the Arm of his God hath raiſed him from the Earth, and hath ſet his Feet upon the Necks of his Enemies, and hath given him power to tread upon the Mighty as the Potter treadeth Clay; *and this is the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in the eyes of his Servants, bleſſed be his name for ever, it is the Lord that lifteth up the weak Hands that hung down, and ſtrengthens the feeble Knees, and makes ſtrait their Paths, that that which is Lame may not be turned out of the Way, but that rather it may be Healed, that the Halting may go upright, and the Lame may leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb might ſing of the goodneſs of the Lord and the Mourner rejoyce in him whoſe Mercy endureth forever.* So believe, hope and truſt you in the Lord all ye that love him, and mourn and long for him, and in patience and contentedneſs (without fainting in your minds) wait for him; for the Lord is good to the man that waits upon him, to the Soul that ſeeketh him; and *it is good both to hope and quietly to wait upon the Lord, more then he that wanteth and waiteth for the Morning; for with the Lord there is great Mercy and plentious Redemption, who redeemeth* Jacob *out of all his Trouble, and is with him in the Fire and in the Water, and in all*

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his Afflictions he forsook him not: Therefore trust you, hope, relie and depend you upon the Lord, all you that love him, and cast your care upon him, for he cares for you, whose tender compassion and faithfulness will never fail to the House of *Israel.*

A General Salutation of Love to the Children of Light.

AND all dearly beloved Friends, everywhere, who are faithful to the Lord and his Truth in your several measures and places, my very dear and unfained love in the precious Truth of our God extends unto all the honest and upright in Heart, who love and delight in Truth and Righteousness, and seek the Praise, Honour and Glory of God alone, Grace and Love be with you, Mercy and Peace attend you, Joy and Comfort fill you, and the Blessing of the Most High rest upon and remain in & with you Day and Night, and the Lord keep you all in the Faith of the Elect Seed, in which is your Victory over the World, in which stand fast, and keep your Dominion in the Lord over the Earth & earthly things, that the Earth may be the Foot-stool of your Minds, & Heaven your Throne, and you to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and to use the World as if you used it not, being loose in heart to that which perisheth with the using; oh, that all Friends that are free from, and void of the Cares of this Life, and Cumbrances of this World may prize (and stand fast in) their Freedom, and not be forward and hasty (in the affectionate part) to run their selves into Bondage to those things that profit not, but hindreth to God-ward, and prove as Bryars and Thorns to the choaking or quenching of the growth of the Seed of Life in the Heart; there is a mind that

hunts and desires after (and is ready (if it be not limitted) to form and create unto it self) a Freedom that stands not in the Liberty of the Sons of God; the Liberty of the Sons of God and Children of the Light stands in that which is a Yoke to the World's Liberty, and their Freedom stands in that which is Bondage to the carnal Mind, and crucifies unto the World and wordly things; also there is a mind that is ready to endeavour and seek to put off, and to keep out of those things (which in their proper place may be said to be lawful) that it seeth it hindreth the growth into the Eternal, and endangereth the Souls standing to God-wards; and truly that is the more purer mind that serves (one Master) God alone; Indeed *dear Friends*, I am ready to desire that this mind (which was in Christ Jesus) may have dominion in our Hearts more and more; that as Strangers and Pilgrims we may be in and to the World and the love thereof, and the Lord alone become object of our Love, and his Truth the covering of our Eyes, that so the desire of our Souls may be unto him, and unto the remembrance of his *Name*, which is like precious *Oyntment* pour'd forth, giving a pleasant smell, and a sweet delectable savour, and therefore do the Virgins love him, and remember his Love more then Wine; yea, more then Father, Mother, Husband, Wife, Children, Silver, Gold, Houses, Lands; yea, he is the chiefest to them of ten thousand, and the Upright love him, for he is altogether comely.

Oh! dearly beloved Friends, much hath the Lord God of power done for us, since the day he found us laid among the Pits, and raised us up from the Dunghil of our own Corruption, and said unto us *Live*, who were dead in Sins and Trespasses; oh, how greatly hath he blessed and prospered us in despite of the spirit that hath so eagerly sought and endeavoured to devour us, and extinguish us from being a People, and hath even made us a Family like a Flock; and though

Balak

Balak and *Balaam*'s ſpirit (the *Beaſt*, *Jezabel* and *falſe Prophets*) have ſought Inchantments againſt us, to Curſe us, yet the God of bleſſings has greatly Bleſt us in our Sufferings, Tribulations and Afflictions, and has made *Joſeph* as a fruitful Bough by the Wall, whoſe Branches grow over the Wall (that doth and will let until it be taken out of the way) though the Archers of *Babylon* have ſhot at him, and grievouſly wounded him, yet his Bow (notwithſtand his great Affliction) hath abode in Strength, and the Hands of his Arms have been made ſtrong by the hand of the mighty God of *Jacob*, who has bleſt *Joſeph*, and unto the uttermoſt bounds of the everlaſting Hills ſhall he be bleſſed forevermore.

Oh, dear Friends, if any People now in being upon the Earth have cauſe to ſpeak well of the Lord, and to truſt in his holy Name, we are the People; for mightily and wonderfully hath the mighty God done and wrought for us, though the blind World ſees it not: Oh! how have we been as *Lambs* among *Lyons*, and yet not devoured, but wonderfully preſerved by the ſecret Power and inviſible Arm of the Lord our Shepherd, who hath been our Defence when the Beaſts of the Forreſt have come forth to Devour, and the *Wolves* have been greedy of their Prey, then hath the Lord fought for Mount *Sion*, and defended the Hill thereof; and though ſome ſaid, *We'll purſue, we'll overtake, our Luſt ſhall be ſatisfied on them; we'll draw our Swords, and our Hands ſhall deſtroy them*; yet how hath the Lord blown in his Wrath upon them, the Sea of his Judgment hath covered them, and they are ſunk as Lead in the bottom of the mighty Waters, and we yet (through mercy) are alive, and have a being among the Living, to ſpeak well of the Lord, and to make mention of the Goodneſs of our Good, and to declare of his Kindneſs, and to praiſe him for his Works, which are marvelous in our Eyes: Oh! his Love, his Mercy and tender fatherly care over and towards

towards us, extends beyond the demonſtration of Words; and oh let the ſenſe thereof be engraven upon the table of our Hearts, that it may humble us, and keep us low before the Lord, and be an Obligation upon every Soul of us, to bind and engage us unto the Lord and his Truth forever.

How mightily hath the Lord limitted and quieted the raging Sea, and made a Calm! oh, that all Friends might take notice of the great Mercy and Love of the Lord to us in this particular, and mind the end of the Lord therein; and let us all take heed we Sin not, becauſe Grace and Mercy to us abounds, leſt it provoke the Lord to Anger, and be a moving cauſe to induce him to let forth the Wind, and ſuffer a Storm again. Oh, that none might get into a falſe eaſe and liberty and wrong ſecurity, becauſe of the preſent Calm; but all to keep retire in that which fitteth and maketh ready for Tryals when they come, in, by and through which we have been upheld & preſerved hitherto, even by the ſecret Power & Arm of the Lord, which is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, but is the ſame that ever it was; and it hath been our Helper in ſix Troubles, and in the ſeventh has not been wanting to us, to help us when there hath been none to help, and to ſupport and uphold us when there hath been none to uphold, but Loads, Burdens and Oppreſſions have been heaped upon us, and to comfort us, when nothing but Sorrow and Trouble from the World compaſſed us about, and when we have had nothing, as from men, but the Bread of Adverſity & the Water of Affliction; even then hath the Lord our tender God been the Comforter of our Hearts, the Refreſher of our Souls, the Rejoycer of our Spirits, and the Lifter up of our Hands when we have been bowed down with the Oppreſſions of our Enemies; his Preſence hath been with us in the Priſon-houſe, and in the low Dungeon, and hath not left us to this day, and aſſuredly never, never, never will leave us, if we leave not him,

him, but will be with us until we have finiſhed our Courſe and fulfilled the dayes of our appointed Time, and our Change come.

So dear Friends, unto the Lord I commit you, who knoweth how it is with all his Babes and Children, and beholdeth all their Tryals, Straits and Sufferings, inward and outward, and his ear is open to the cry of the Poor, and groanings of the Needy, who is God all-ſufficient for all thoſe that truſt, hope, relie and depend upon him, and able to keep them by his power through Faith in his Name, unto his heavenly Kingdom: So the Lord be with you all, and the Almighty protect and defend you, and keep you from Evil, unſpotted from the World, and preſerve you in Love, Peace and Unity with himſelf, and one with another in his innocent unfained Love, in his Light, Life, Power and Truth, and make and keep you all of one Heart, and one Mind, and one Soul; that you all with one conſent may ſtill worſhip and ſerve the Lord God in the one Spirit and the one Truth, in which I dearly greet, ſalute and embrace you all, and remain your Friend and Companion in the Patience and Tribulation of Jeſus; Farwell, dear Friends.

William Bennit.

Dear Friends,

IN the Love which waxeth not Old, neither is ſubject to Change, which God hath ſhed abroad in the hearts of thoſe that believe in the Light, through the operation of his Eternal Spirit; in this Love which openeth our Hearts unto the Lord, and one another, doth the unfeigned Salutation of my Soul reach forth unto you, as in which Love I abide, I cannot forget the Family of Love, and Houſhold

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of Faith, neither can length of Time, nor diſtance of Place, Bonds nor Tribulations extinguiſh the remembrance of you, whom the Lord hath choſen (out of the Elect Seed) from out of the Families of the Earth, to place his Name among, and to manifeſt his Power and Glory in and through you his People, to the praiſe of your God, in your Generation: dear Friends, who are called to be made partakers of the Bleſſed Everlaſting Inheritance of the Saints in Light, and through Faith in the Light of Life you are called and raiſed up, to bear Teſtimony unto him whom the Nations Deſpiſe; but unto you that believe in him he is Pretious, and you that have ſeen his Beauty and beheld his Comlineſs, and have taſted of his Love, and have ſavoured the ſweetneſs of his pretious Oyntment, which hath healed your Wounds, and cured your Diſeaſes, and with which your Souls have been Bathed, Warmed and ſweetly Refreſhed; unto you that have taſted of his Divine Vertues, who is the Light of the World, he is the chiefeſt of ten Thouſand; who hath called and choſen you out of the World, to follow him in the Regeneration, and to bear his Image before the World, and to ſhew forth his Teſtimony againſt the World, therefore do the World hate you, and deſire and ſeek your Deſtruction, and would tempt you, and by cruelty force you from the beloved of your Souls; but dear Hearts, every one cleave in ſpirit unto the Lord, and hold faſt his bleſſed Truth, received into your Hearts, that the Enemy within, nor his Inſtruments without by all their Temptations and Cruelty, may never move you to decline, nor degenerate from that bleſſed Teſtimony which God hath given you to bear for him, in the midſt of a Wicked and Ungodly Generation; who muſt fill up the meaſure of their Iniquity, that Judgment may come upon them to the full, and the meaſure of your Sufferings muſt alſo be fulfilled; therefore, dear Lambs, hold faſt Faith and a good Conſcience, and put

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on Courage and Strength unto the end; and hold fast the Word of Patience, that you may be kept in the hour of Temptation, and the Preservation of your Souls you may come to witness by the Power of God, through all Tryals, Troubles, Losses, Straits, Afflictions and Tribulations, that the Lord suffereth to befal you, trust you in him, and depend upon his everlasting Arm, which is your help, stay and strength, God will restrain the Wrath of our Enemies, and dissipate the Purposes, and confound the Evil Devises of our Adversaries, so far as it seemeth good unto him; the Lord God Everlasting who keepeth Covenant with his People, and whose tender Mercy, Compassion and Fatherly Care faileth not towards the House of *Jacob*; his blessed soul refreshing strengthening Presence be with all his People, to Feed, Nourish and Strengthen them, and Cherish them, Support and Uphold them, Comfort and Consolate them in all their sufferings for his Names sake, and bear up all his little Ones, for whom my Soul is in Travel, and the Lord keep all his in the Covenant of his everlasting Love, that if our Earthen Vessels be Broken, and turned to the Dust for the Testimony of Jesus, our Souls may rest with the Lord; so whether we Live we may Live to God, or whether we Dye we may Dye unto God, that whether we Live or Dye we may be the Lords, and he be glorified in us either by Life or Death, which is the desire of your Friend and Brother in the love of Truth. Dear Lambs, my love remains with you, though Bonds hold me close, be you bundled up together in Love, Peace and Unity, that you may be a help strength and comfort one to another in the Lord, and let none be careless, but all watch and keep close to the Lord, and keep your meetings, and wait upon God to be fitted for every Tryal yet to come, neither let any be discouraged or surprized with fear through the terror of your Enemies, you know that the Lord hath carried us through

much already, his Arm is not ſhortned, our God is a God of Wonders, let us ſtand ſtill and ſee his Salvation, which he will manifeſt on the behalf of the meek of the Earth, that are appointed as Sheep for the Slaughter, and hath no helper but the Lord; God Almighty haſten it for his own Elects ſake, which cryeth Day and Night unto him, *Amen* ſaith my Soul, even come Lord Jeſus, come quickly, and take unto thee thy great power to Reign, for unto thee belongeth the Dominion, for thou art worthy, let all Nations come and Worſhip before thee, and give Glory to thy Name, who art Juſt in all thy Ways, and Righteous in all thy Judgments, thy Counſels of old are Faithfulneſs and Truth.

Bury *Goal this* 18*th of the* 9*th Month* 1670.

William Bennit.

A Loving Exhortation and Warning to SEA-MEN, *and all others whom it doth concern.*

YOU *that go down to the Sea in Ships, that do Buſineſs in great Waters, where you ſee the Works of the Lord, and his Wonders in the deep*; great Cauſe have you to fear and love the great God of Heaven and Earth, who giveth you Life and Being, who is the God of all your Mercies, who in *Mercy* hath oftentimes preſerved you in great *Danger* and *Peril*, and delivered you when you have been ready to *Periſh*: Oh, forget not his *Mercy towards you*; but *Repent ſpeedily*, and Fear and Dread his great Name, and ſtand in Awe, and Sin no more againſt him, whoſe *Power* is over all, *who commands the Winds and the Seas, and they obey him*: When ſometimes you

you have been in Great *Jeopardy of Your Lives*, and the Lord hath in *Mercy* delivered you, how little have ſome of *You Eyed* the *Mercy* and delivering Hand of the Lord therein; but have been *Ready* to aſcribe the *Honour of your Deliverance* to the *Anchor*, *Cable* and *Manhood*, more then to the Lord; and when *you* have been in Great *Danger of your Lives*, and ſaw no *Way*, *but you muſt Periſh*, have you not then cryed to the Lord to deliver you? (and the Guilt of your Iniquities being heavy upon your Conſciences) have you not been ready to make Promiſes to the Lord in your Diſtreſs, that if he ſpared your Lives, ye would Repent, and turn unto him, and Fear, and Serve him, and forſake your Evil Ways? And when the Lord hath anſwered your Deſires, and in Mercy hath given you your Lives for a Prey, when you came to Land, have you then perſormed your Vows and Promiſes to the Lord? or have you not gone on in Sin and Evil ſtill? let God's Witneſs in every Conſcience ſpeak, for unto that I make my Appeal: Conſider how greatly it concerneth you Sea-men (and ſo it doth all other People) to mind their latter End, and to be ready for ſuddain Death; let every particular One conſider ſeriouſly how it ſtands between God and their own Souls: Oh, it is a bleſſed Thing to be fit to Dye, and to feel Peace with God; it is their *Sins* and *Iniquities* that make People unfit for God's Kingdom; *they that dye in their Sins muſt periſh*, as Chriſt ſaid unto ſome, *Except you repent you ſhall likewiſe perish*; *without Holineſs and Purity none can ſee God*: The *Soul of Man is Immortal*, and can *never Dye*, but muſt (when it leaves the Body) be in a feeling *Sence* of *Joy* and *Peace*, or *Wo* and *Miſery* forever; *The Wicked and all that forget God muſt be turned into Hell*: Oh that all People, Young and Old, may repent and return to the Lord with their whole Hearts, and *he will ſhew them Mercy!* Prize your time, for it is precious, *and you know not how ſhort it is*: Oh fear and dread the

the Eternal God that *giveth you Life* and *Being*, and *can take it away when he pleaseth*; It is not a talking of being *Saved* and *Redeemed by Christ*, and of his *dying for you*, will *stand you in any stead*, that live in *Sin* and *Vanity*; Christ said, *A Man must be born again, or else he cannot see the Kingdom of God*: So *dear People*, both Young and Old, mind the *Pure Divine Light of Christ Jesus in your own Consciences*, that which *Checketh* and *Reproveth you, when you speak or act that which is Evil*, and come to *Obey* it; for it is the *Way of Life*, and will *Lead you*; *If you obey it*, out of all *Sin*, *Ungodliness* and *Worldly Lusts*, *into the Way of Life*, *and teach you to live Soberly*, *Righteously* and *Godly in this present Evil World*; Then *Peace* with God will be the *Portion of your Souls*.

Written in Tender Bowels of *Unfeigned Love* to *your Souls*, by a Friend to *all People*,

The 15th of the 3d Month 1675 } *William Bennit.*

THE END.